
DC
SPECIAL
1
$2.00
CAN $2.85
U.K. 80p
1987
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
ZATANNA
JOIN HER ON HER QUEST TO FIND THE PLACE WHERE MAGIC BEGINS!
THE HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE is must reading
A TRIPLE-SIZED ADVENTURE!



ZATANNA SPECIAL 1 Published by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N Y 10103 Copyright © 1987 DC Comics Inc All Rights Reserved The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc Advertising Representative Print Advertising Representatives Inc., 355 Lexington Avenue New York, NY 10017 (212) 391-1400 Printed in U S A
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company


ZATANNA?
ZATANNA MISTRESS OF MAGIC
ACKS
ZEE?
EARTH TO ZATANNA, COME IN, ZATANNA...
REMEMBER ME? JEFF, YOUR MANAGER? THREE MINUTES TO CURTAIN, KID, AND YOU'RE OFF IN DREAMLAND, TRYING TO GIVE ME A CORONARY!
OH. SORRY, JEFF, I WAS JUST...
DO YOU BELIEVE IN PREMONITIONS?
I BELIEVE IN CANCELLED PERFORMANCES CONTRACTS, ZEE...
...AND THAT'S JUST WHAT WE'LL HAVE IF YOU'RE LATE FOR THE FIRST SHOW.
DON'T FRET. I PROMISE I'LL BE FINE.
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT PLEASURE, THE ROYAL MAHARAJA HOTEL IS PROUD TO PRESENT...



Featuring a character created by GARDNER F. FOX

letterers BEN ODA, CARRIE SPIEGLE, JOHN COSTANZA / colorist GRAY MORROW / editors ALAN GOLD & BARBARA RANDALL


WATCH, AND I WILL MAKE YOU CHILDREN AGAIN.
YOU WILL NOT KNOW THE REAL FROM THE UNREAL.
AND WHAT YOU SEE WILL SEEM A DREAM.


SLOANE, SHE'S TERRIFIC-- BEST ACT WE'VE EVER BOOKED!
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, KID. YOU'VE GOT THE TOUCH. YOU WORK A CROWD THE WAY PERLMUN WORKS A FIDDLE.
WATCHING YOU MAKES ME WISH WE WERE...
OWWW!
KAAAAH...
LOUSY HABIT. NEVER SHOULD'VE GOT STARTED AGAIN.
THIS TIME I QUIT FOR GOOD.

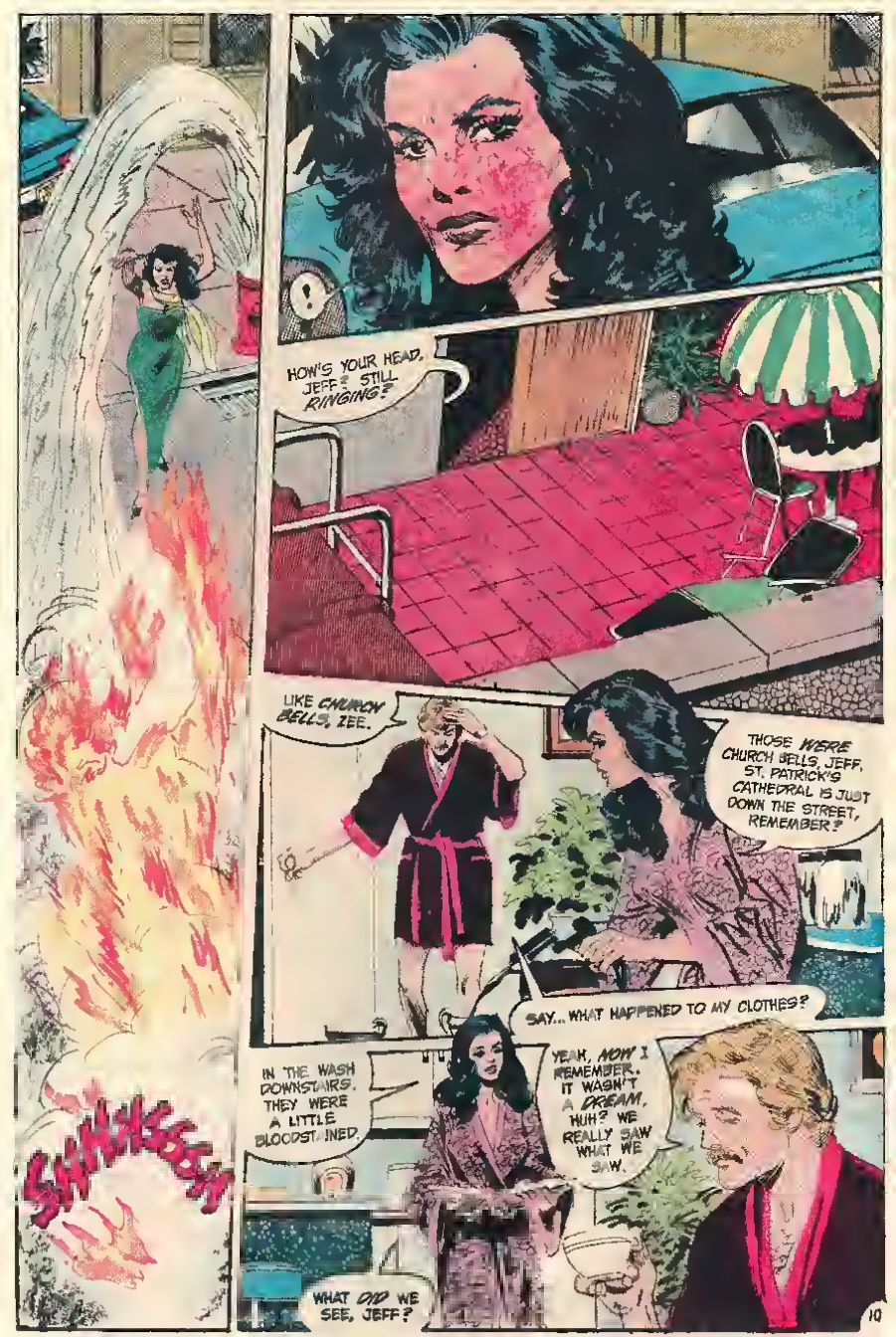

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
FOR MY NEXT ILLUSION, I'LL REQUIRE THE ASSISTANCE OF SOMEONE FROM THE AUDIENCE... YOU, SIR. WOULD YOU JOIN ME ON THE STAGE?
THIS ISN'T GOING TO HURT, IS IT?
TRUST ME.
DO YOU READ THE NEWSPAPER, SIR?
WELL, UM, CERTAINLY... THE TIMES, THE JOURNAL...
WOULD YOU READ THE HEADLINE ON THIS PAPER FOR US, SIR?
THIS ISN'T GOING TO BITE ME, IS IT?
YAAAAH
NO, SIR, I AROMISE IT WON'T--


HTRAE NEPO REDNU EGATS--
ZEE!
OH MY GOD!
GARD SIHT BRUTAERC OT RUOY YREIF SHTPED!*
*TO DECIPHER ZATANNA'S SPELL, READ EACH WORD BACKWARDS. --Alan.
FWHOOM!
EGIVERC ESALC!
LORD-
LORD-


WHE-EW
I THOUGHT YOU QUIT SMOKING, JEFF.
SKRRITCH
SO DID I, UNTIL YOU PULLED THAT STUNT ON THE STAGE TONIGHT.
WARN ME NEXT TIME YOU'RE GONNA CHANGE THE ACT, OKAY, ZEE?
I DIDN'T CHANGE THE ACT, JEFF.
AW, NO, YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME--
THAT PYTHON WAS AS MUCH A SURPRISE FOR ME AS IT WAS FOR YOU AND THE AUDIENCE.
YOU'RE GOING TO TURN YOUR FINGERS, JEFF.
HUH? OH, YEAH--
HEY, IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN.

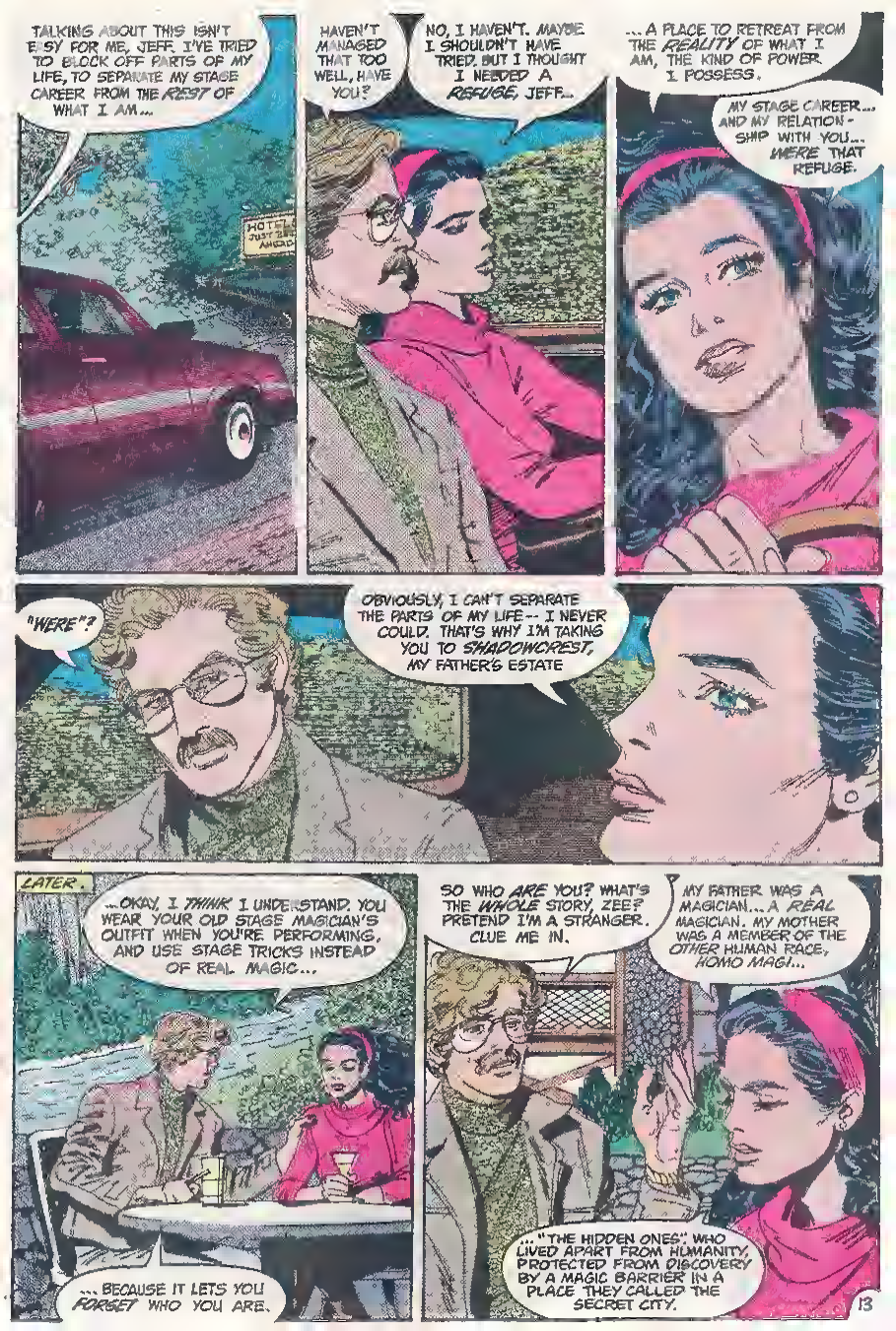

W-WHAT...? JEFF, THAT FACE...THAT'S MY MOTHER!
LIKE THE IMAGE IN MY DRESSING ROOM MIRROR ...BUT SHE'S DEAD...
BTOUM!
ZEE-- UP AHEAD--
LOOK OUT!
BOUNK
KREEEEEEEE
JEFF'S STUNNED-- HAVE TO GET HIM AWAY FROM THE CAR, IN CASE THE GAS TANK CATCHES--
--FIRE?
HOTATH'S RINGS!


RETAW MORE THAROYH JUCP--
SWOOOOSH!
ESUOD ESEHT SEMALF OT HRUB OH BROM!


SHHHSSSSH
HOW'S YOUR HEAD, JEFF? STILL RINGING?
LIKE CHURCH BELLS, ZEE.
THOSE WERE CHURCH BELLS, JEFF. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL IS JUST DOWN THE STREET, REMEMBER?
SAY... WHAT HAPPENED TO MY CLOTHES?
IN THE WASH DOWNSTAIRS. THEY WERE A LITTLE BLOODSTAINED.
YEAH, NOW I REMEMBER. IT WASN'T A DREAM, HUH? WE REALLY SAW WHAT WE SAW.
WHAT DID WE SEE, JEFF?

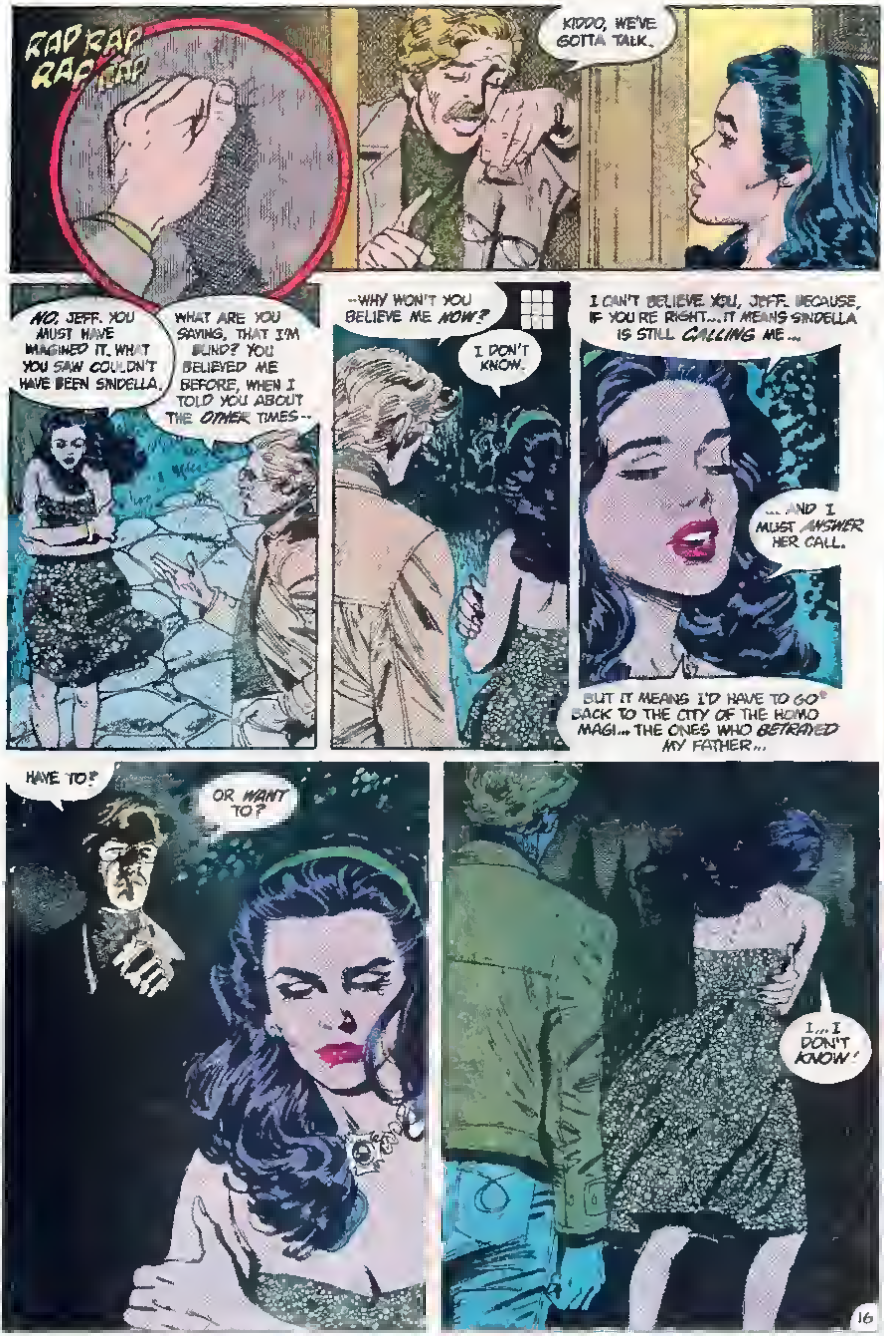

IF YOU DON'T KNOW, I SURE DON'T, BUT I THOUGHT YOU SAID SOMETHING IN THE CAR ABOUT... YOUR MOTHER--?
SINDELLA IS DEAD. IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HER. IT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
WHOA, KIDDO, SLOW DOWN. IF THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED HANGING OUT WITH YOU, IT'S THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.
TELL THE TRUTH NOW.
YOU THINK IT IS YOUR MOTHER--
--AND EVEN IF SHE'S DEAD, SHE'S TRYING TO REACH YOU, SOMEHOW.
OLD JEFFREY SLOANE'S NOT AS DUMB AS HE LOOKS, KIDDO.
I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, JEFF.
LEAVE IT ALONE.
LIKE HELL.
EVERY TIME I GET CLOSE TO YOU, YOU SHUT ME OUT. LIKE THERE'S AN INVISIBLE LINE BETWEEN US--I STAY ON MY SIDE, YOU STAY ON YOURS. WELL, THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH ANYMORE.
ALL THESE YEARS, WITH THIS ON-AGAIN, OFF-AGAIN CAREER OF YOURS, YOU'VE TREATED ME LIKE I WAS SOME KIND OF MACHINE. WIND ME UP, SET ME DOWN, WATCH ME RUN.
USE ME, THEN DROP ME--
--THEN PICK ME UP AGAIN, RIGHT WHERE YOU LEFT OFF. YEAH, I'M YOUR MANAGER, ZEE, BUT I'M HUMAN, TOO. I CARE ABOUT YOU.
AT LEAST, I TRY. IF YOU'D JUST LET ME.

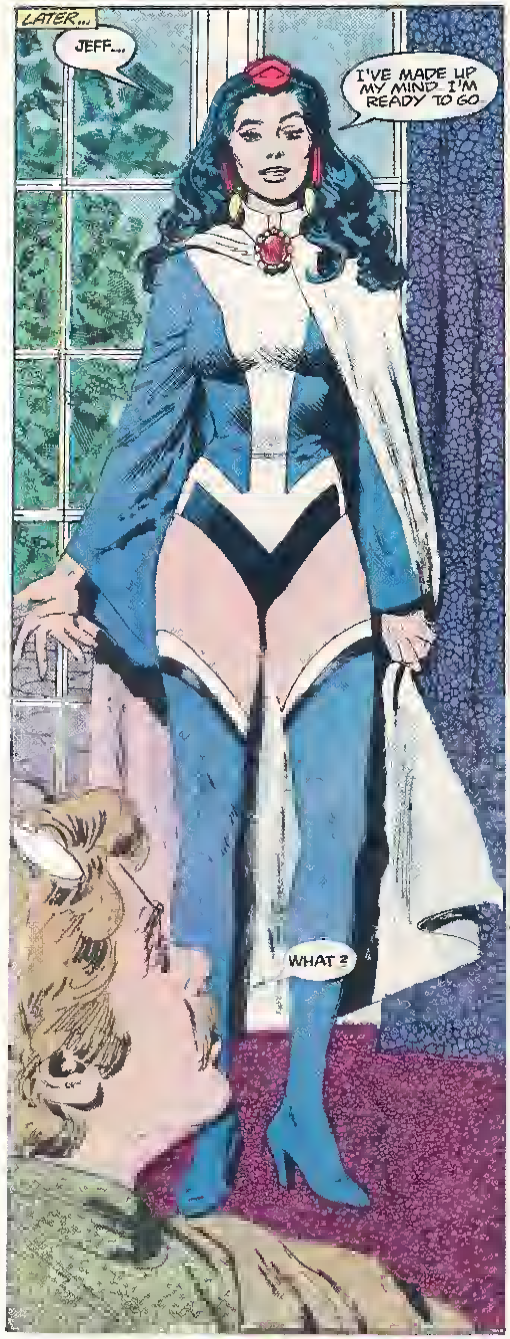

BUT, NO--YOU'RE A CLOSED BOOK, WE'RE NOT EVEN FRIENDS. YOU SHARE YOUR FEELINGS WITH FRIENDS. BUT, NO--NOT YOU.
ONE LAST TIME, KIDDO--TELL ME WHAT'S HURTING YOU, OR I'M OUT THE DOOR.
!
FINE. GREAT. SEE YOU AROUND.
SLAM!
KNOCK KNOCK
I FORGOT... YOU'VE GOT MY CLOTHES.
OH, JEFFREY...
37
12


TALKING ABOUT THIS ISN'T EASY FOR ME, JEFF. I'VE TRIED TO BLOCK OFF PARTS OF MY LIFE, TO SEPARATE MY STAGE CAREER FROM THE REST OF WHAT I AM...
HAVEN'T MANAGED THAT TOO WELL, HAVE YOU?
NO, I HAVEN'T. MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIED. BUT I THOUGHT I NEEDED A REFUGE, JEFF...
...A PLACE TO RETREAT FROM THE REALITY OF WHAT I AM, THE KIND OF POWER I POSSESS.
MY STAGE CAREER... AND MY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU... WERE THAT REFUGE.
"WERE"?
OBVIOUSLY, I CAN'T SEPARATE THE PARTS OF MY LIFE-- I NEVER COULD. THAT'S WHY I'M TAKING YOU TO SHADOWCREST, MY FATHER'S ESTATE
LATER.
...OKAY, I THINK I UNDERSTAND. YOU WEAR YOUR OLD STAGE MAGICIAN'S OUTFIT WHEN YOU'RE PERFORMING, AND USE STAGE TRICKS INSTEAD OF REAL MAGIC...
...BECAUSE IT LETS YOU FORGET WHO YOU ARE.
SO WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'S THE WHOLE STORY, ZEE? PRETEND I'M A STRANGER. CLUE ME IN.
MY FATHER WAS A MAGICIAN... A REAL MAGICIAN. MY MOTHER WAS A MEMBER OF THE OTHER HUMAN RACE, HOMO MAGI...
..."THE HIDDEN ONES", WHO LIVED APART FROM HUMANITY, PROTECTED FROM DISCOVERY BY A MAGIC BARRIER IN A PLACE THEY CALLED THE SECRET CITY.


"MY FATHER STUMBLED ACROSS THE CITY, THEY MET, AND SINDELLA LEFT WITH MY FATHER A YEAR LATER IN THE STATES, I WAS BORN... AND SIX MONTHS AFTER THAT, MOTHER DIED IN A CAR CRASH.
OR SO I THOUGHT
SHE WASN'T DEAD?
NO. SHE'D BEEN CAPTURED BY HER PEOPLE, THE HIDDEN ONES, AND RETURNED TO THE SECRET CITY.
HOMO MAGI HAVE ALWAYS LIVED APART FROM THE REST OF HUMANITY... THEY'RE GENETIC SORCERERS, ABLE TO CONTROL MYSTIC FORCES AT WILL...
...BUT UNABLE TO CONTROL THEIR EMOTIONS IN THE PRESENCE OF HOMO SAPIENS.
KZZZAAK
FATHER MUST HAVE BEEN DESCENDED FROM A SIMILAR STRAIN OF HOMO MAGI, WITHOUT KNOWING IT, WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN HIS ABILITY TO--
KZZZAAK
KID, IF THAT IS YOUR MOTHER TRYING TO CONTACT YOU, SHE'S STARTING TO PLAY ROUGH...
LET'S GET TO THE HOUSE

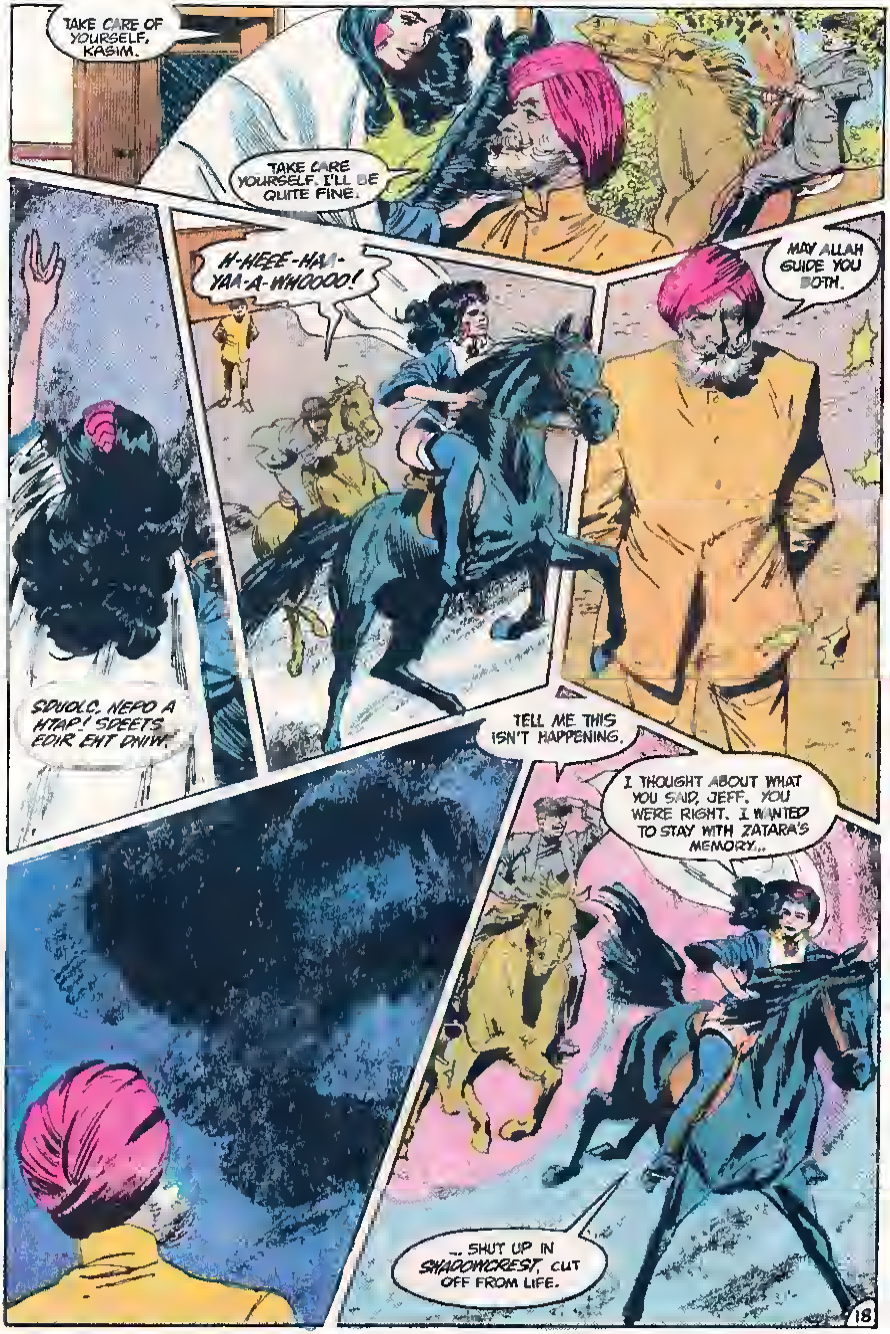

KASIM...
THIS IS JEFF.
GREETINGS I HAVE TAKEN GOOD CARE OF THE HOUSE IN YOUR ABSENCE.
DECIDED TO HANG AROUND AFTER THE OLD GUY DIED?
IT IS MY DUTY AND MY PRIDE.
WHATEVER.
YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC, KASIM?
I BELIEVE THERE IS MUCH IN THIS WORLD THAT OUR MINDS CANNOT COMPREHEND.
LIKE I SAID. MAGIC
BEFORE I MET ZEE, I THOUGHT ALL THAT HOCUS-POCUS STUFF WAS THE BUNK. YOU DON'T GROW UP ON THE STREET IN CHICAGO WITHOUT GETTING A FAIRLY HARD-NOSED VIEW OF THE WORLD, LET ME TELL YOU.
THERE ARE DAYS WHEN I WISH I STILL SAW THE WORLD THE WAY I USED TO--ALL BLACK AND WHITE, WITH HARD, NEAT EDGES.
SPOOKS, SORCERY. IT SCARES THE SPIT OUT OF M--

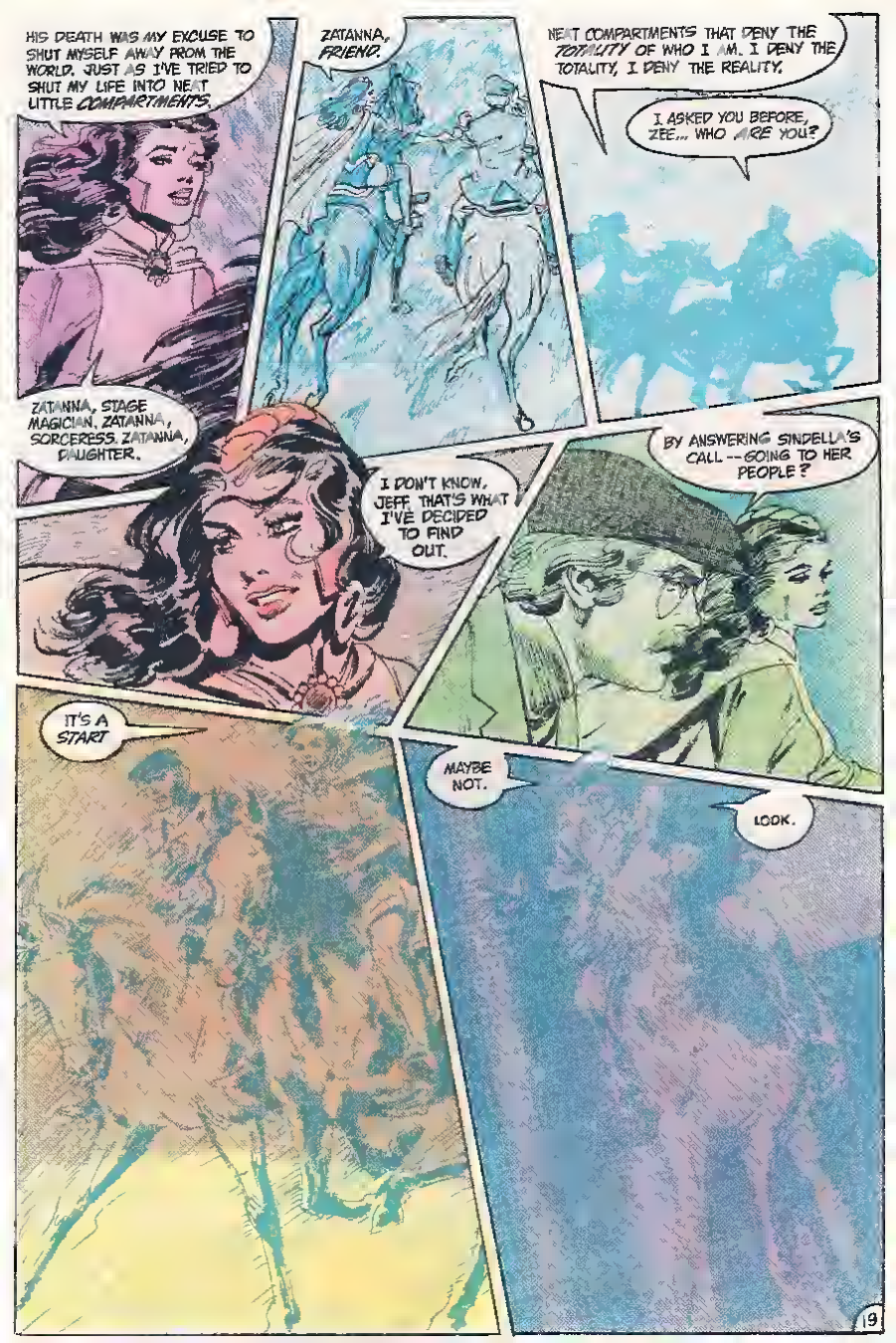

RAP RAP RAP RAP
KIDDO, WE'VE GOTTA TALK.
NO, JEFF. YOU MUST HAVE IMAGINED IT. WHAT YOU SAW COULDN'T HAVE BEEN SINDELLA.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, THAT I'M BLIND? YOU BELIEVED ME BEFORE, WHEN I TOLD YOU ABOUT THE OTHER TIMES--
--WHY WON'T YOU BELIEVE ME NOW?
I DON'T KNOW.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU, JEFF. BECAUSE, IF YOU'RE RIGHT...IT MEANS SINDELLA IS STILL CALLING ME...
...AND I MUST ANSWER HER CALL.
BUT IT MEANS I'D HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE CITY OF THE HOMO MAGI... THE ONES WHO BETRAYED MY FATHER...
HAVE TO?
OR WANT TO?
I...I DON'T KNOW!


LATER...
JEFF...
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND. I'M READY TO GO
WHAT?


GO WHERE?
TO MY MOTHER'S PEOPLE.

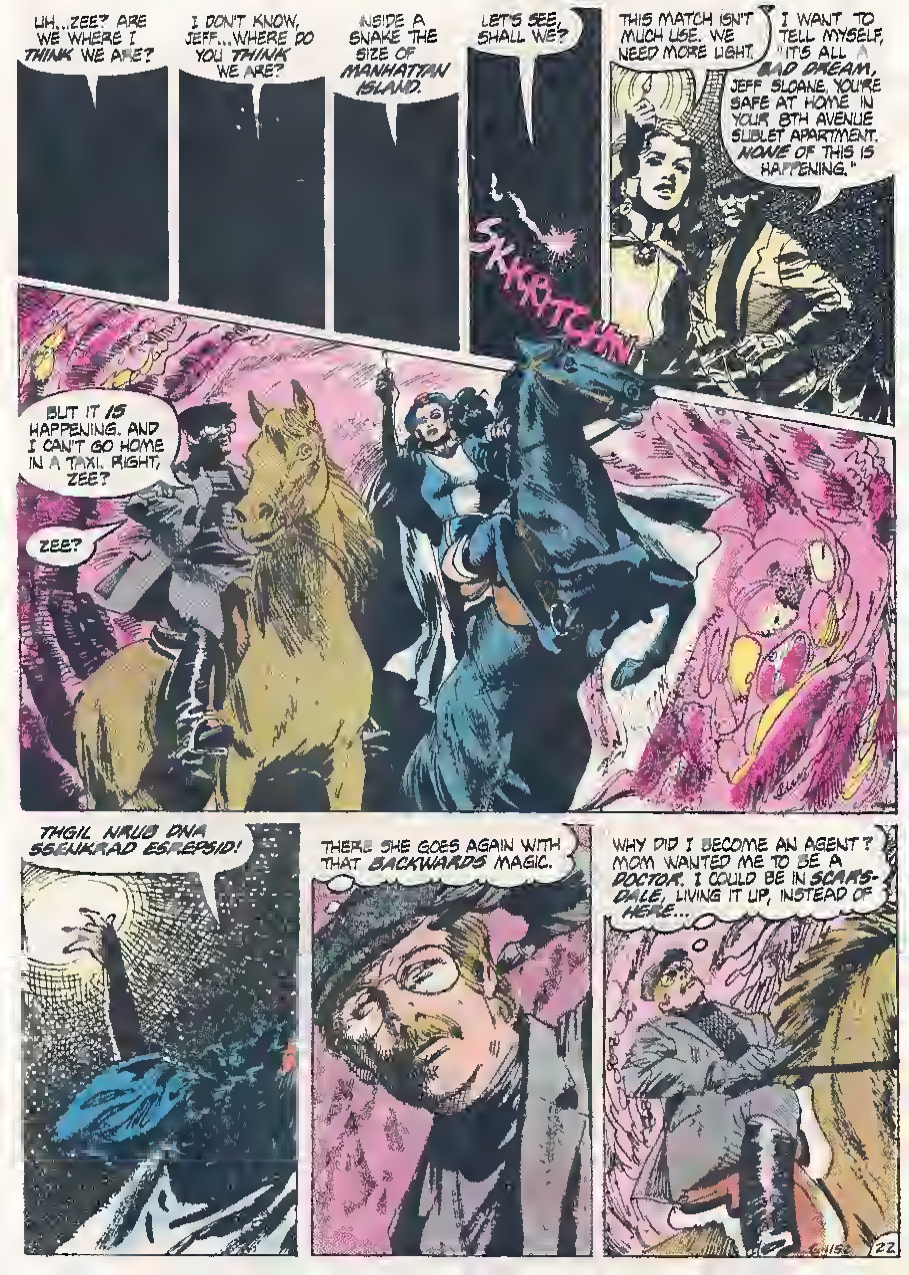

ON *HORSEBACK*? ALL THE WAY TO *TURKEY*?
RAVENMANE AND *EPONESS* WERE BRED IN THE SECRET CITY, BY THE HIDDEN ONES. YOU'LL FIND THEY'RE RATHER SPECIAL.

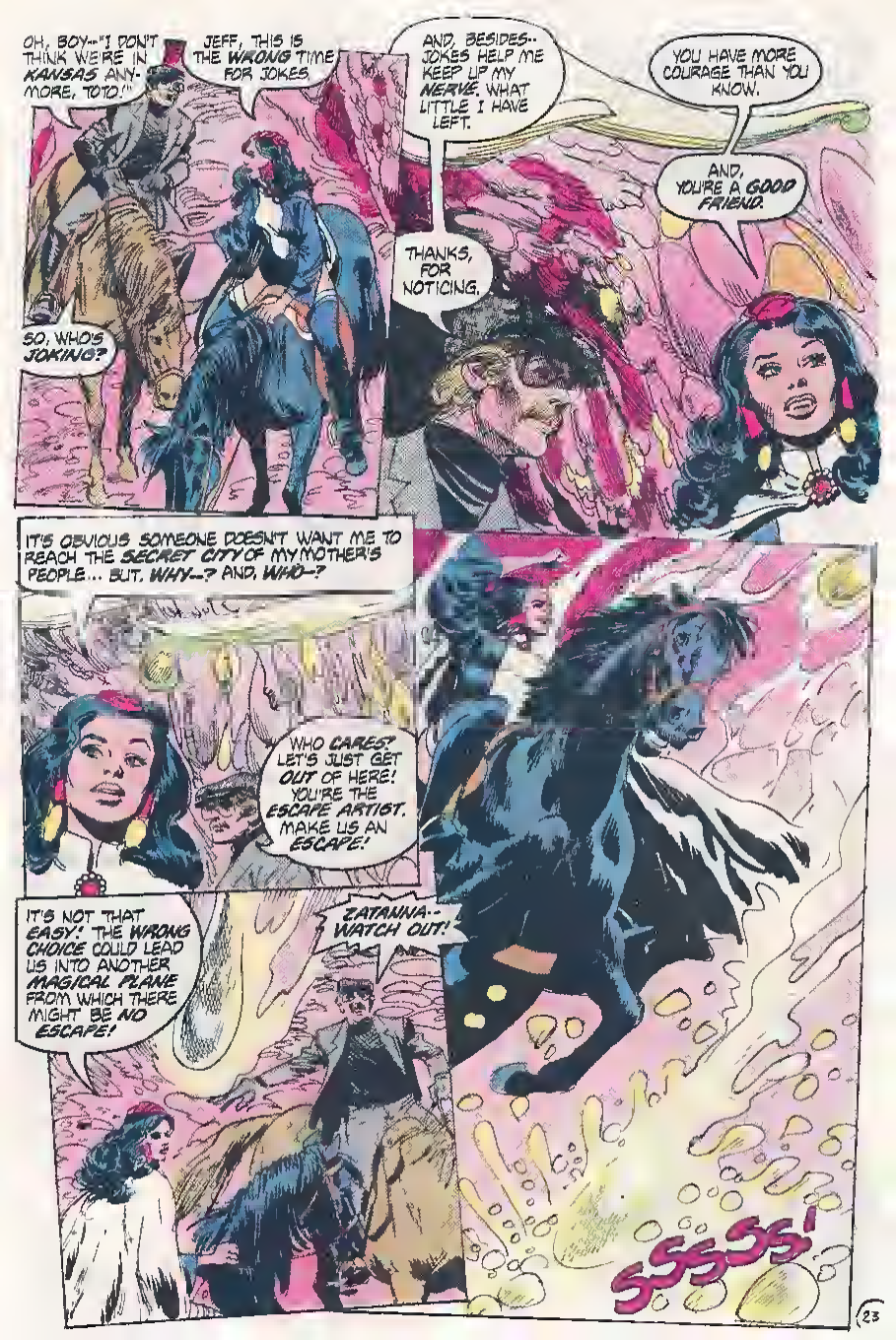

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, KASIM.
TAKE CARE YOURSELF. I'LL BE QUITE FINE.
N-NEEE-HAA-YAA-A-WWOOOO!
MAY ALLAH GUIDE YOU BOTH.
SDUOLC. NEPO A HTAP! SPEETS EDIR EHT DNIW.
TELL ME THIS ISN'T HAPPENING.
I THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID, JEFF. YOU WERE RIGHT. I WANTED TO STAY WITH ZATARA'S MEMORY...
... SHUT UP IN SHADOWCREST, CUT OFF FROM LIFE.


HIS DEATH WAS MY EXCUSE TO SHUT MYSELF AWAY FROM THE WORLD. JUST AS I'VE TRIED TO SHUT MY LIFE INTO NEAT LITTLE COMPARTMENTS.
ZATANNA, FRIEND.
NEAT COMPARTMENTS THAT DENY THE TOTALITY OF WHO I AM. I DENY THE TOTALITY, I DENY THE REALITY.
I ASKED YOU BEFORE, ZEE... WHO ARE YOU?
ZATANNA, STAGE MAGICIAN, ZATANNA, SORCERESS. ZATANNA, DAUGHTER.
I DON'T KNOW, JEFF. THAT'S WHAT I'VE DECIDED TO FIND OUT.
BY ANSWERING SINDELLA'S CALL--GOING TO HER PEOPLE?
IT'S A START
MAYBE NOT.
LOOK.


UH... WILD GUESS, BUT I'D SAY SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT YOU GOING ANYWHERE.
ALL THE MORE REASON FOR ME TO GO.
MROTS DNA REDNUHT, DNIW DNA NIAR--
--RAET ENT GNINTHGIL REIRRAB NWOD, TEL SU EDIR EERF NIAGA!
I'M GOING TO BE SICK.
KKKICKKRAAAKK
SSSKKRAAROOM

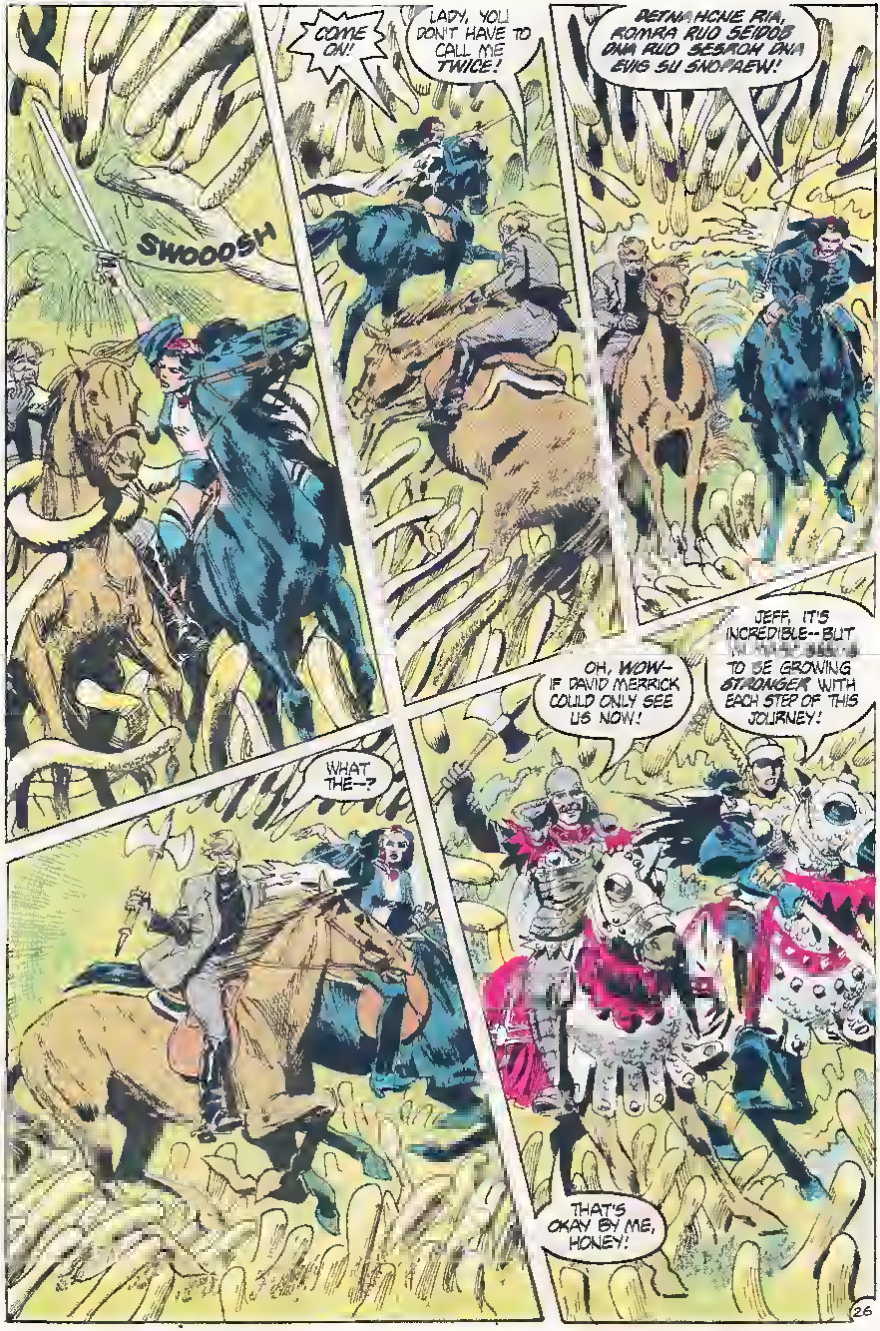

ZEE? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CLOUDS? THE LIGHTNING? THE WIND?
WE'RE DEALING WITH GREATER SORCERY THAN I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED BEFORE, JEFF.
I SUDDENLY FEEL THIS IS ALL VERY VERY DANGE--
ZEE, DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT I THINK WE'RE BEING SWALLOWED...


UH...ZEE? ARE WE WHERE I THINK WE ARE?
I DON'T KNOW, JEFF...WHERE DO YOU THINK WE ARE?
INSIDE A SNAKE THE SIZE OF MANHATTAN ISLAND.
LET'S SEE, SHALL WE?
THIS MATCH ISN'T MUCH USE. WE NEED MORE LIGHT.
I WANT TO TELL MYSELF, "IT'S ALL A BAD DREAM, JEFF SLOANE. YOU'RE SAFE AT HOME IN YOUR 8TH AVENUE SUBLET APARTMENT. NONE OF THIS IS HAPPENING."
SKKRTCHH
BUT IT IS HAPPENING. AND I CAN'T GO HOME IN A TAXI, RIGHT, ZEE?
ZEE?
THGIL NAUD DNA SSENKRAD ESREPSID!
THERE SHE GOES AGAIN WITH THAT BACKWARDS MAGIC.
WHY DID I BECOME AN AGENT? MOM WANTED ME TO BE A DOCTOR. I COULD BE IN SCARSDALE, LIVING IT UP, INSTEAD OF HERE...
CHIS
22

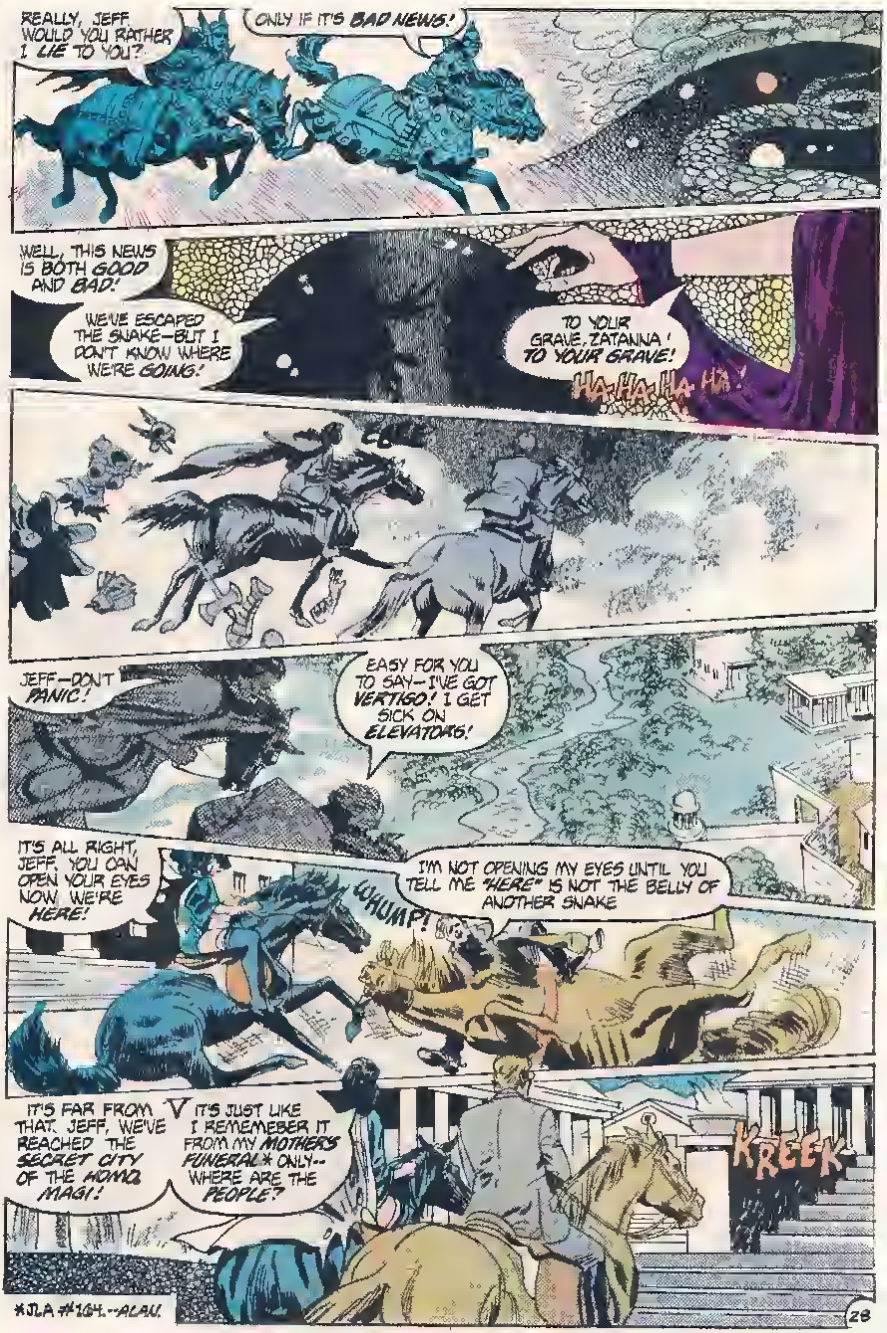

OH, BOY--I DON'T THINK WE'RE IN KANSAS ANYMORE, TOTO!"
JEFF, THIS IS THE WRONG TIME FOR JOKES.
SO, WHO'S JOKING?
AND, BESIDES-- JOKES HELP ME KEEP UP MY NERVE. WHAT LITTLE I HAVE LEFT.
THANKS, FOR NOTICING.
YOU HAVE MORE COURAGE THAN YOU KNOW.
AND, YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND.
IT'S OBVIOUS SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT ME TO REACH THE SECRET CITY OF MY MOTHER'S PEOPLE... BUT, WHY--? AND, WHO--?
WHO CARES? LET'S JUST GET OUT OF HERE! YOU'RE THE ESCAPE ARTIST. MAKE US AN ESCAPE!
IT'S NOT THAT EASY! THE WRONG CHOICE COULD LEAD US INTO ANOTHER MAGICAL PLANE FROM WHICH THERE MIGHT BE NO ESCAPE!
ZATANNA-- WATCH OUT!
SSSSS!


WHOA!
SPLASH
NNYYH!
THAT ACID VENOM BURNED RIGHT THROUGH THE MAGICAL CAPE I MADE FROM MY MOTHER'S CONJURING GOWN.
WHICH MEANS THE VENOM HAS MAGICAL POWERS STRONGER THAN THE SPELL MY MOTHER CANTED OVER THIS CLOTH.
SPELL-SHMELL! CAN'T WE JUST GO?
WE ARE DEALING WITH EXTREMELY POWERFUL FORCES HERE. WE MUST PROCEED SLOWLY AND WITH CAUTION.
GREAT. MEANWHILE, THAT FANG'S GETTING READY TO DRIP AGAIN...
THIS ISN'T WHAT I HAD IN MIND!
JEFF, YOU GOT YOUR WISH. WE'RE ON THE MOVE!
WHOA, HORSE! THAT'S-- NO EXIT!
NNYEEH! NNYH!
SSSWHACK!
SPLASH

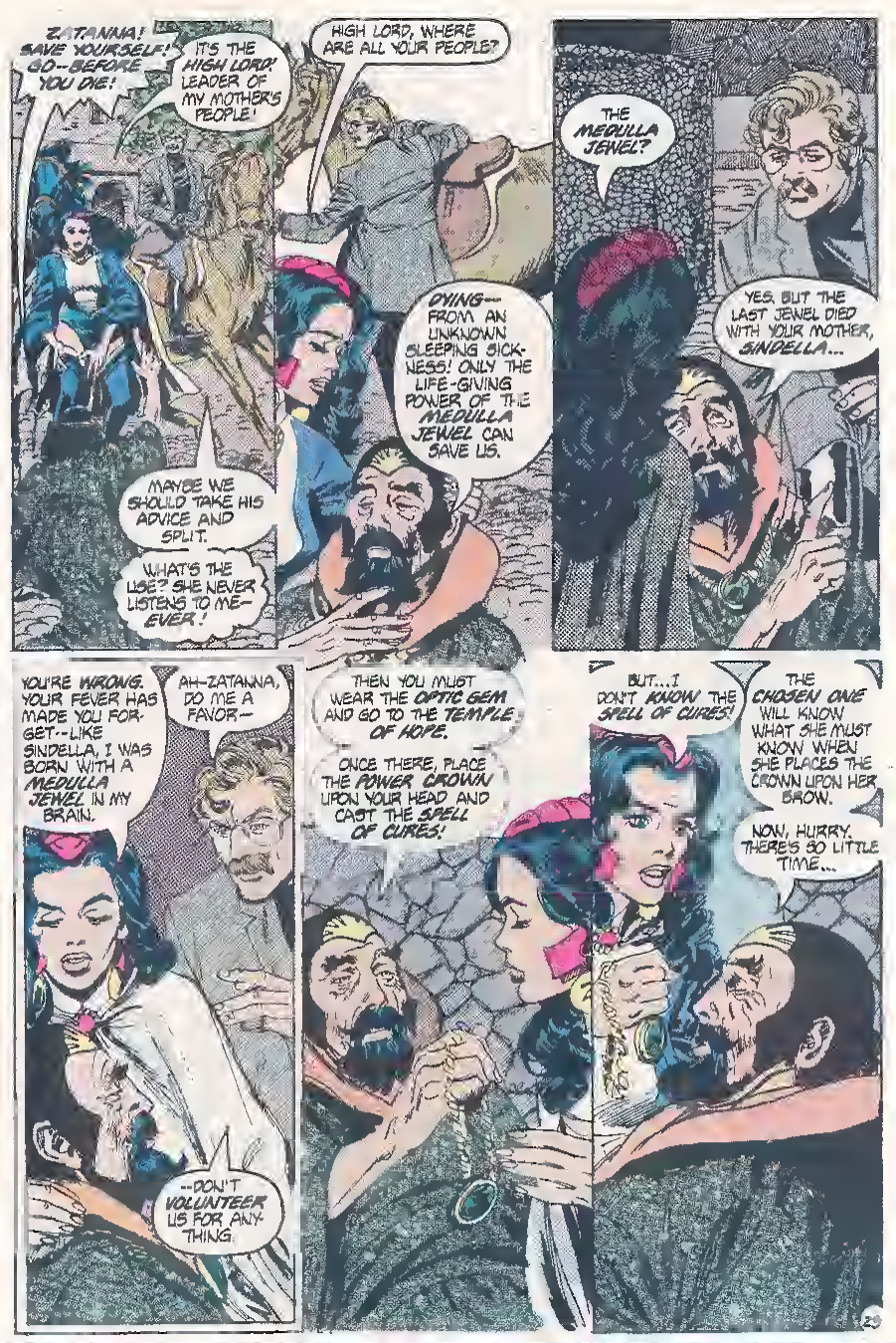

YUCK!
SPLASH
YAAG! THIS STUFF FEELS LIKE YESTERDAY'S SPINACH QUICHE--AND IT SMELLS LIKE LAST YEAR'S SEWAGE! WHERE ARE WE?
I THINK WE'VE ENTERED THE SNAKE'S DIGESTIVE TRACT.
I WISH YOU HADN'T TOLD ME THAT.
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS!
LOOK OUT!
OOOY.
ZEE, I WANT YOU TO KNOW ONE THING BEFORE I DIE--I FORGIVE YOU!
SDNIW FO EMIT, EKAM EM A DROWS!

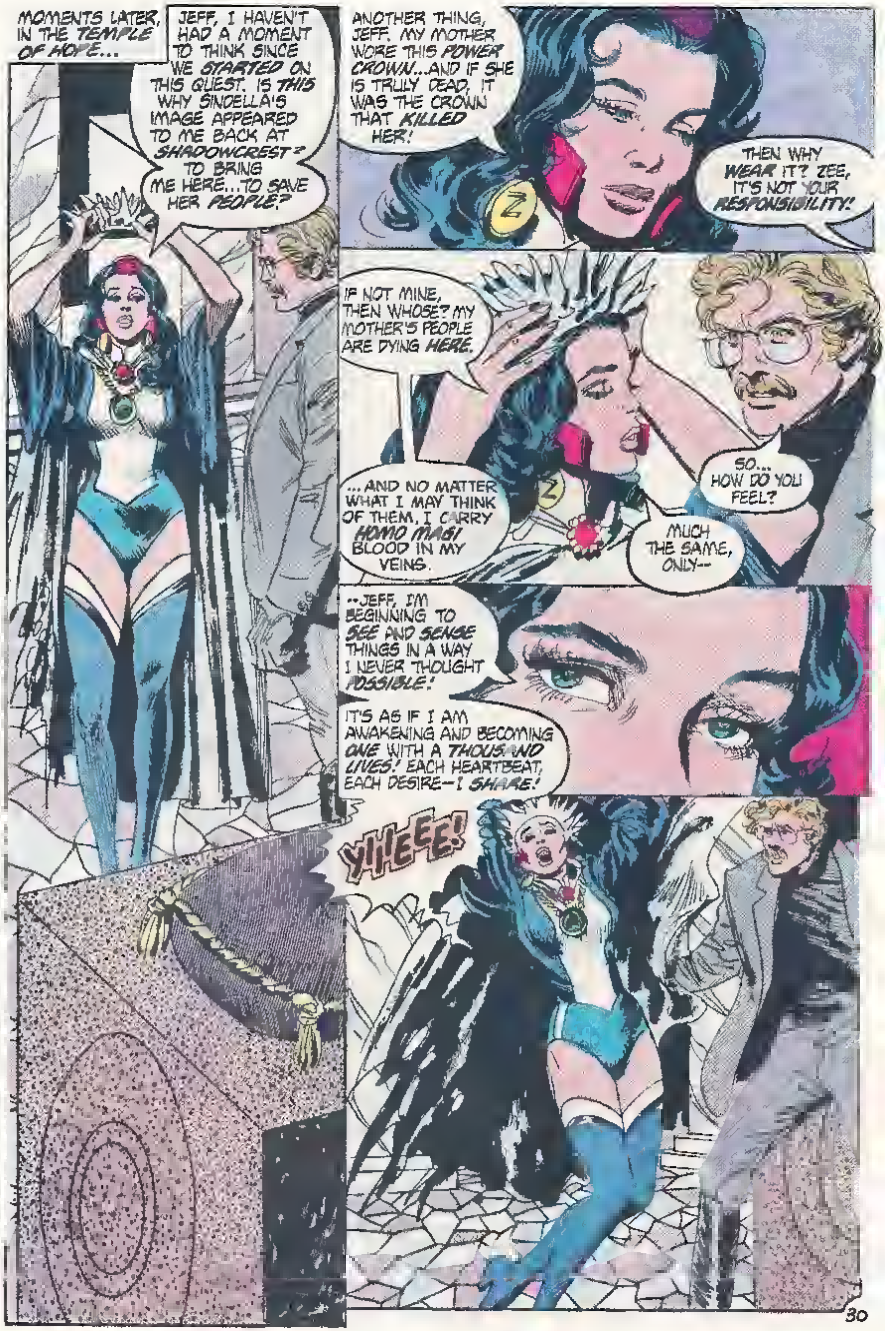

SWOOOSH
COME ON!
LADY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO CALL ME TWICE!
DETNA HCNE RIA, ROMRA RUO SEIDOS DNA RUO SESAOH DNA EVIG SU SNOITAEW!
WHAT THE--?
OH, WOW-- IF DAVID MERRICK COULD ONLY SEE US NOW!
JEFF, IT'S INCREDIBLE-- BUT TO BE GROWING STRONGER WITH EACH STEP OF THIS JOURNEY!
THAT'S OKAY BY ME, HONEY!

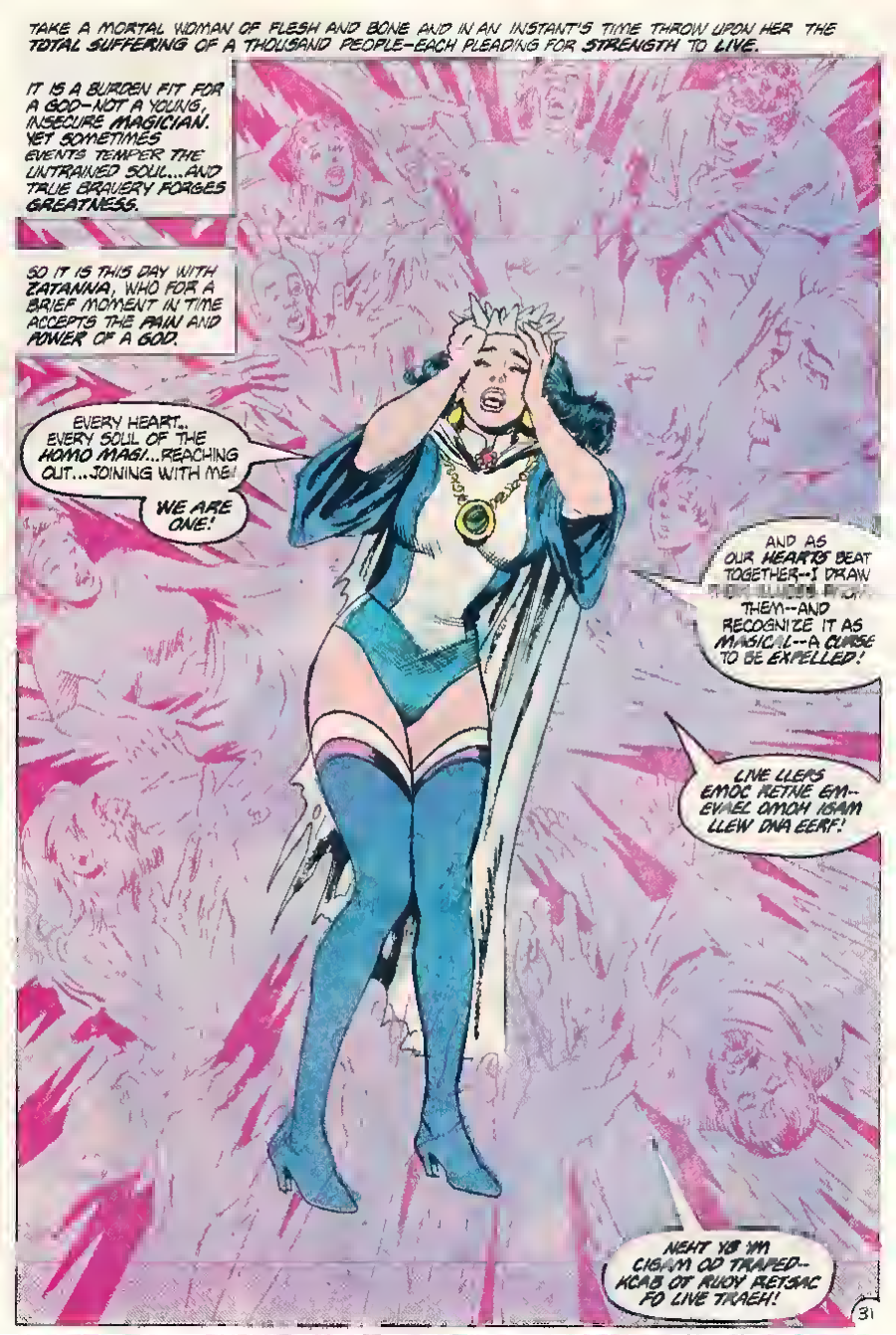

ZEE, COULD YOU PLEASE CAST A SPELL AND GET US OUT OF HERE?
WHOOOSH
I NEED TIME TO CONJURE! AND I THINK I KNOW JUST WHERE TO FIND THAT TIME.
FOLLOW ME!
OTHER AGENTS HANDLE NICE, NORMAL CLIENTS ME, I'M STUCK WITH A SORCERESS. THING IS, I LOVE THE LADY...
JEFF.. HURRY!
FOR THE MOMENT--WE'RE SAFE! BUT I MUST CAST A SPELL QUICKLY IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE!
I'M ALL FOR SURVIVING!
CIGAM SREWOP TAHT I WON EVAH-EKAT SU TUD FO SIHT ENITNEPPAES EVAKS!
ZEE--YOU CAST BETTER THAN FENTON AND FEINBERG!
I HOPE SO!
YOU MEAN YOU'RE NOT SURE?
NO, FORGET I ASKED! DON'T SAY ANYTHING!
KRNK


REALLY, JEFF WOULD YOU RATHER I LIE TO YOU?
ONLY IF IT'S BAD NEWS!
WELL, THIS NEWS IS BOTH GOOD AND BAD!
WE'VE ESCAPED THE SNAKE—BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING!
TO YOUR GRAVE, ZATANNA! TO YOUR GRAVE!
HA-HA-HA-HA!
JEFF—DON'T PANIC!
EASY FOR YOU TO SAY—I'VE GOT VERTIGO! I GET SICK ON ELEVATORS!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, JEFF. YOU CAN OPEN YOUR EYES NOW. WE'RE HERE!
I'M NOT OPENING MY EYES UNTIL YOU TELL ME "HERE" IS NOT THE BELLY OF ANOTHER SNAKE
WHUMP!
IT'S FAR FROM THAT, JEFF. WE'VE REACHED THE SECRET CITY OF THE HOMO MAGI!
IT'S JUST LIKE I REMEMEBER IT FROM MY MOTHER'S FUNERAL* ONLY-- WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE?
KREEK

*JLA #164.--ALAN.

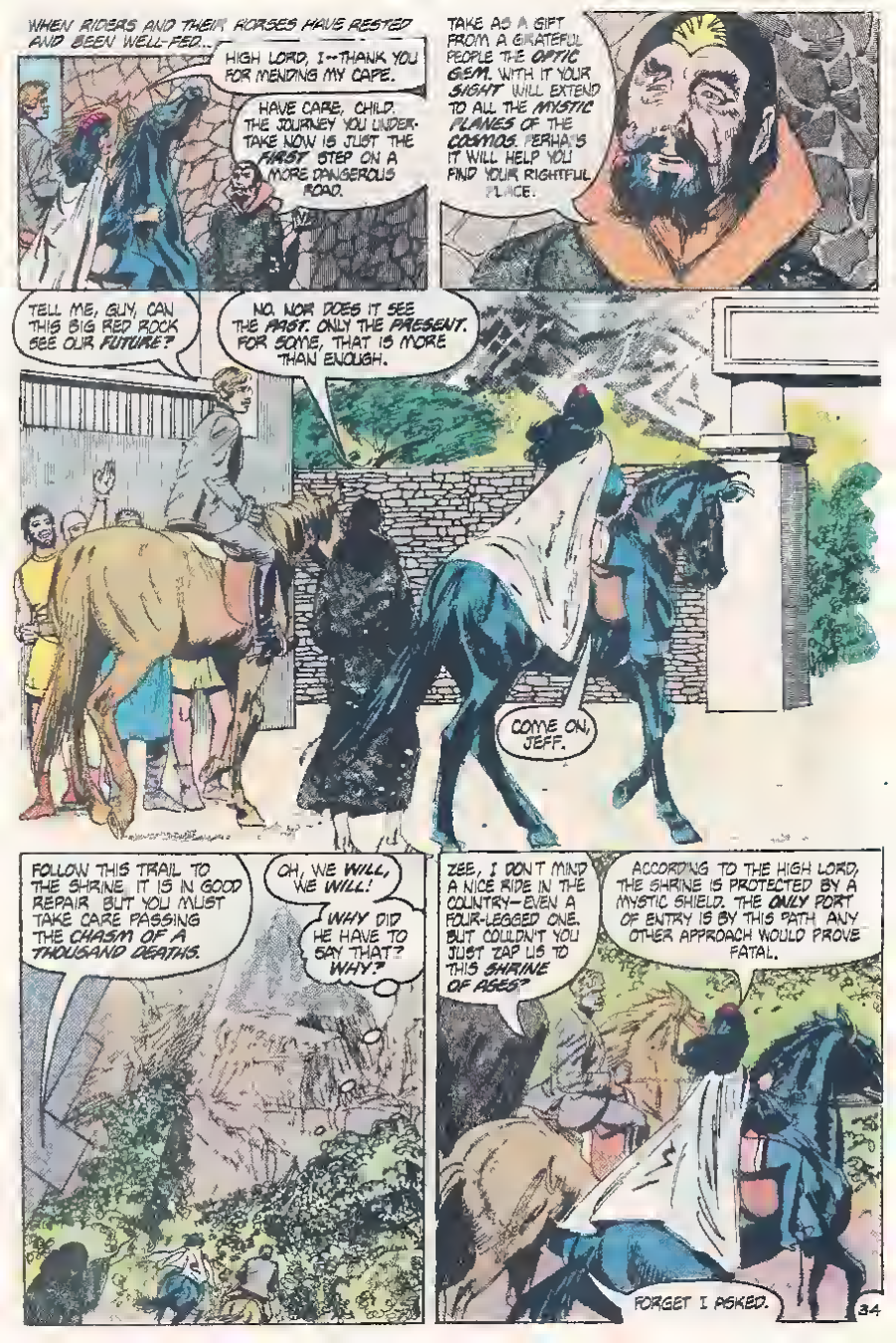

ZATANNA! SAVE YOURSELF! GO--BEFORE YOU DIE!
IT'S THE HIGH LORD! LEADER OF MY MOTHER'S PEOPLE!
HIGH LORD, WHERE ARE ALL YOUR PEOPLE?
DYING--FROM AN UNKNOWN SLEEPING SICKNESS! ONLY THE LIFE-GIVING POWER OF THE MEDULLA JEWEL CAN SAVE US.
MAYBE WE SHOULD TAKE HIS ADVICE AND SPLIT.
WHAT'S THE USE? SHE NEVER LISTENS TO ME--EVER!
THE MEDULLA JEWEL?
YES, BUT THE LAST JEWEL DIED WITH YOUR MOTHER, SINDELLA...
YOU'RE WRONG. YOUR FEVER HAS MADE YOU FORGET--LIKE SINDELLA, I WAS BORN WITH A MEDULLA JEWEL IN MY BRAIN.
AH-ZATANNA, DO ME A FAVOR--
--DON'T VOLUNTEER US FOR ANYTHING.
THEN YOU MUST WEAR THE OPTIC GEM AND GO TO THE TEMPLE OF HOPE.
ONCE THERE, PLACE THE POWER CROWN UPON YOUR HEAD AND CAST THE SPELL OF CURES!
BUT...I DON'T KNOW THE SPELL OF CURES!
THE CHOSEN ONE WILL KNOW WHAT SHE MUST KNOW WHEN SHE PLACES THE CROWN UPON HER BROW.
NOW, HURRY. THERE'S SO LITTLE TIME...

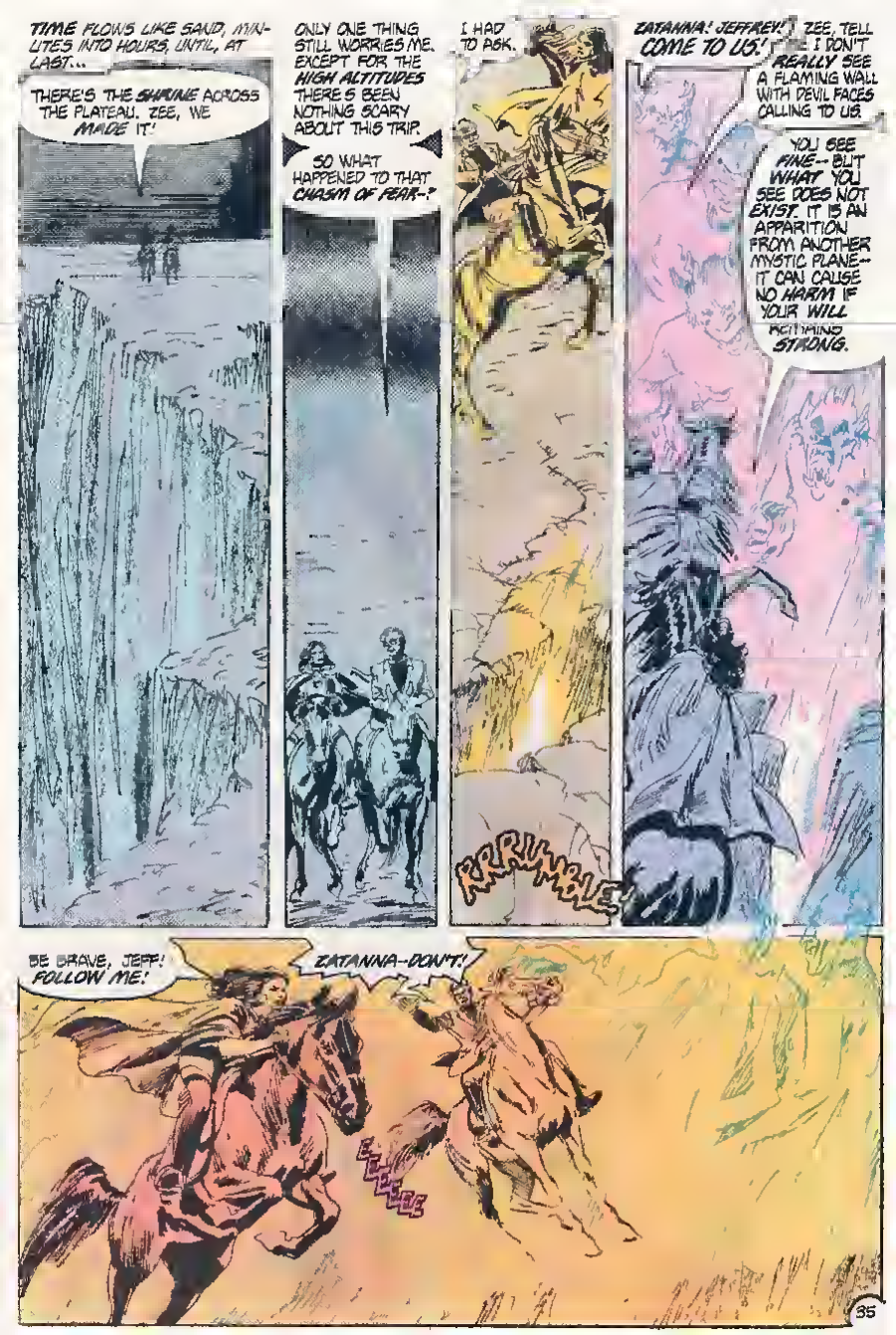

MOMENTS LATER, IN THE TEMPLE OF HOPE...
JEFF, I HAVEN'T HAD A MOMENT TO THINK SINCE WE STARTED ON THIS QUEST. IS THIS WHY SINDELLA'S IMAGE APPEARED TO ME BACK AT SHADOWCREST? TO BRING ME HERE...TO SAVE HER PEOPLE?
ANOTHER THING, JEFF. MY MOTHER WORE THIS POWER CROWN...AND IF SHE IS TRULY DEAD, IT WAS THE CROWN THAT KILLED HER!
THEN WHY WEAR IT? ZEE, IT'S NOT YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!
IF NOT MINE, THEN WHOSE? MY MOTHER'S PEOPLE ARE DYING HERE.
...AND NO MATTER WHAT I MAY THINK OF THEM, I CARRY HOMO MAGI BLOOD IN MY VEINS.
SO... HOW DO YOU FEEL?
MUCH THE SAME, ONLY--
--JEFF, I'M BEGINNING TO SEE AND SENSE THINGS IN A WAY I NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE!
IT'S AS IF I AM AWAKENING AND BECOMING ONE WITH A THOUSAND LIVES! EACH HEARTBEAT, EACH DESIRE--I SHARE!
YIIEEE!


TAKE A MORTAL WOMAN OF FLESH AND BONE AND IN AN INSTANT'S TIME THROW UPON HER THE TOTAL SUFFERING OF A THOUSAND PEOPLE—EACH PLEADING FOR STRENGTH TO LIVE.
IT IS A BURDEN FIT FOR A GOD—NOT A YOUNG, INSECURE MAGICIAN. YET SOMETIMES EVENTS TEMPER THE UNTRAINED SOUL...AND TRUE BRAVERY FORGES GREATNESS.
SO IT IS THIS DAY WITH ZATANNA, WHO FOR A BRIEF MOMENT IN TIME ACCEPTS THE PAIN AND POWER OF A GOD.
EVERY HEART.. EVERY SOUL OF THE HOMO MAGI...REACHING OUT...JOINING WITH ME!
WE ARE ONE!
AND AS OUR HEARTS BEAT TOGETHER--I DRAW
THEM--AND RECOGNIZE IT AS MAGICAL--A CURSE TO BE EXPELLED!
LIVE LLERS EMOC KETNE EM-- EVAEL OMOH ISAM LLEW DNA EERF!
NEHT YB YM CISAM OD TRAPED-- KCAB OT RUOY RETSAC FO LIVE TRAEH!


IN A HEARTBEAT THE ILLNESS PASSES THROUGH HER, LEAVING BEHIND SCARS, MEMORIES, TRIUMPH, AND--UNCONSCIOUSNESS...
ZATANNA!
ZATANNA I LOVE YOU. YOU CAN'T DIE... MY LIFE WOULD BE NOTHING WITHOUT YOU...
ZATANNA!
JEFF, DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?
YOU'RE ALIVE!
AH--ER--TEMPLE WATER! I TRIED TO REVIVE YOU WITH IT
OH, REALLY?
AND SOGGY!


LATER, A THANKFUL RACE PAYS HOMAGE TO A VALIANT CHAMPION...
HEAR ME, HOMO MAGI! ZATANNA HAS SAVED ALL OUR LIVES. WELCOME HER TO DWELL AMONG US FOR HER LIFETIME!
ALL HAIL ZATANNA!
HIGH LORD, I'M SORRY, BUT I CANNOT STAY. I HAVE A LIFE IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
BUT, ZATANNA! THE POWER CROWN HAS NO POWER BEYOND THESE WALLS.
THEN I MUST LEAVE IT BEHIND.
NONSENSE, MY CHILD! YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELF TO BE TRULY ONE OF US. CAN YOU NOT SEE THAT YOUR PLACE IS HERE AMONG THE HOMO MAGI?
WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE? MY DEAD MOTHER'S SPIRIT CALLED ME HERE. PERHAPS I WAS MEANT TO TAKE HER PLACE HERE.
WHAT DO I DO?
CHILD, ONLY THE GUARDIAN OF THE SHRINE OF AGES MIGHT HAVE SUCH KNOWLEDGE.
I WAS AFRAID HE'D SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
HIS SHRINE IS THERE--ATOP THE HIGHEST OF OUR MOUNTAINS!
GREAT. HERE WE GO AGAIN!


WHEN RIDERS AND THEIR HORSES HAVE RESTED AND BEEN WELL-FED...
HIGH LORD, I--THANK YOU FOR MENDING MY CAPE.
HAVE CARE, CHILD. THE JOURNEY YOU UNDERTAKE NOW IS JUST THE FIRST STEP ON A MORE DANGEROUS ROAD.
TAKE AS A GIFT FROM A GRATEFUL PEOPLE THE OPTIC GEM. WITH IT YOUR SIGHT WILL EXTEND TO ALL THE MYSTIC PLANES OF THE COSMOS. PERHAPS IT WILL HELP YOU FIND YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE.
TELL ME, GUY, CAN THIS BIG RED ROCK SEE OUR FUTURE?
NO. NOIR DOES IT SEE THE PAST. ONLY THE PRESENT. FOR SOME, THAT IS MORE THAN ENOUGH.
COME ON, JEFF.
FOLLOW THIS TRAIL TO THE SHRINE. IT IS IN GOOD REPAIR. BUT YOU MUST TAKE CARE PASSING THE CHASM OF A THOUSAND DEATHS.
OH, WE WILL, WE WILL!
WHY DID HE HAVE TO SAY THAT? WHY?
ZEE, I DON'T MIND A NICE RIDE IN THE COUNTRY--EVEN A FOUR-LEGGED ONE. BUT COULDN'T YOU JUST ZAP US TO THIS SHRINE OF ASES?
ACCORDING TO THE HIGH LORD, THE SHRINE IS PROTECTED BY A MYSTIC SHIELD. THE ONLY PORT OF ENTRY IS BY THIS PATH. ANY OTHER APPROACH WOULD PROVE FATAL.
FORGET I ASKED.


TIME FLOWS LIKE SAND, MINUTES INTO HOURS, UNTIL, AT LAST...
THERE'S THE SHRINE ACROSS THE PLATEAU. ZEE, WE MADE IT!
ONLY ONE THING STILL WORRIES ME. EXCEPT FOR THE HIGH ALTITUDES THERE'S BEEN NOTHING SCARY ABOUT THIS TRIP.
SO WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT CHASM OF FEAR--?
I HAD TO ASK.
KRRUMBLE
ZATANNA! JEFFREY! COME TO US!
ZEE, TELL I DON'T REALLY SEE A FLAMING WALL WITH DEVIL FACES CALLING TO US.
YOU SEE FINE-- BUT WHAT YOU SEE DOES NOT EXIST. IT IS AN APPARITION FROM ANOTHER MYSTIC PLANE-- IT CAN CAUSE NO HARM IF YOUR WILL REMAIND STRONG.
BE BRAVE, JEFF! FOLLOW ME!
ZATANNA--DON'T!
EEEEEEEE


WHEN IS COURAGE BORN? TODAY, IN JEFF SLOANE, THE SEED GROWS TO MATURITY IN LESS THAN A HEARTBEAT...
ZEE--WAIT FOR ME!
FATHER...MOTHER!
HOLY CECIL B. DEMILLE!
ZATANNA! ZATANNA!
ZATANNA--GET GOING!
I CAN'T! I MUST STAY WITH MY PARENTS!
ZATANNA! ZATANNA!
JEFF--NO!
ZATANNA!
KRAKK!
KRAKK!
KRAKK!


THERE ARE QUIET MOMENTS THAT WILL BE REMEMBERED THROUGHOUT A LIFETIME...
HEY, KID YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES. THANKS TO YOU.
ZEE, UH--LOOK! THE SHRINE--WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
THAT'S REALLY GOOD, SLOANE. WHY CAN'T YOU SAY WHAT YOU MEAN--WHAT YOU FEEL?
THE SHRINE...
ENTER, ZATANNA!
HONEY, A WORD OF CAUTION BEFORE WE GO IN--WATCH OUT FOR GITANGERS WHO KNOW YOUR NAME!
OKAY. I GIVE UP. WHERE IS EVERYONE?
HERE, JEFFREY SLOANE HERE.
I AM CALLED KOHL--THE ANCIENT ONE. GUARDIAN OF THE SHRINE OF AGES.
WELCOME.


MY FRIEND AND I ARE HONORED TO BE HERE.
THE HONOR IS MINE. LONG HAVE I AWAITED THE ARRIVAL OF THE CHOSEN ONE.
THE SHRINE OF AGES WAS FIRST BUILT BY MY PEOPLE WHEN WE FLED ANCIENT ROME.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL.
YEAH-- VERY TASTEFUL.
I WAS ITS ARCHITECT, AND I HAVE BEEN ITS GUARDIAN EVER SINCE.
WAIT ONE GAFFER'S MINUTE! DO YOU EXPECT US TO BELIEVE YOU'RE OVER A THOUSAND YEARS OLD?
JEFF--
AGE IS IRRELEVANT... WHEN YOU WAIT TO WELCOME THE CHOSEN ONE, SHE WHOSE FATE LIES ON ANOTHER PLANE. BY DRINKING DAILY FROM THE SACRED WATERS I HAVE PROLONGED MY LIFE.
HATE TO DISAPPOINT YOU, KOHL, BUT ZEE'S NOBODY'S "CHOSEN ONE."
THE HIGH LORD SENT US HERE FOR A CURE FOR ZATANNA'S INDECISION.
NO. THE HIGH LORD SENT YOU BECAUSE HE RECOGNIZED FATE.
BEHOLD.
ZATANNA-- THAT'S YOU!
I KNOW...

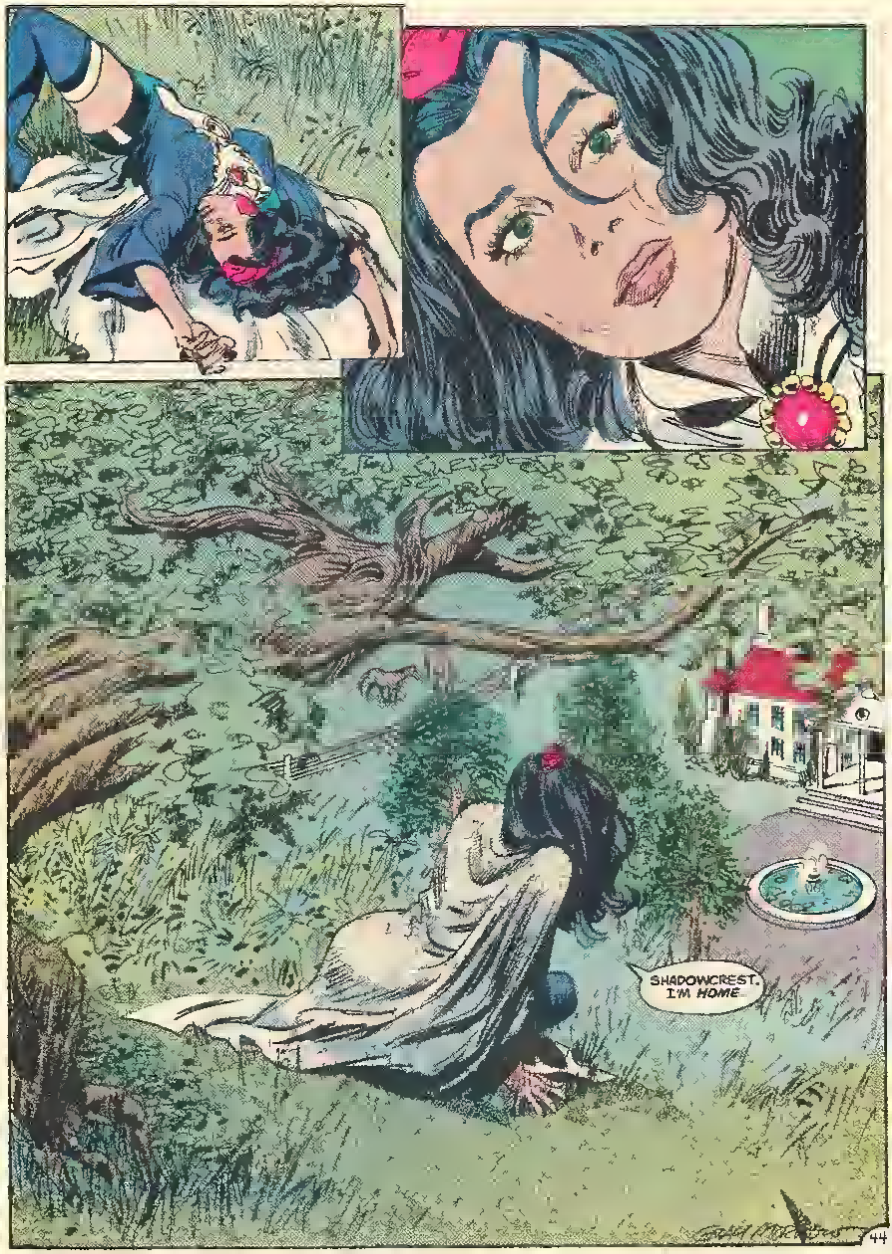

AFTER YOU DEFEATED OUR HIGH LORD*--HE CAME HERE ON RETREAT. SEEING THE STATUE, HE WANTED TO PURSUE YOU, TO FORCE YOUR RETURN. BUT I FORBADE HIM.
I KNEW IF YOU WERE TRULY CHOSEN--YOU WOULD COME HERE OF YOUR OWN FREE WILL!
BUT I HAVE COME ONLY TO FIND PEACE FOR MY SOUL.
THE ONLY WAY TO FIND THE ANSWER, AND CALM YOUR SPIRIT, IS TO ACCEPT YOUR DESTINY
YOU CANNOT LEAVE EVEN AS MY LIFE ENDS, YOUR FIRST CHALLENGE APPROACHES.
FACE THE CHALLENGE, CLEANSE YOUR SOUL IN THE ETERNAL WATERS--LET THEM CARRY YOU TO ANOTHER PLANE.
ONLY THUS CAN YOU HOPE TO SAVE YOUR INNER SELF.
ZEE--WE GOTTA LEAVE!
NO! FIRST, THERE ARE ANSWERS I MUST HAVE FROM KOHL!
NO TIME! THE OPTIC GEM...GUIDE YOU...
* JLA #161--ALAN.
ZEE--MOVE IT! OR--WE'RE IN BIG TROUBLE!
WHA--?


ZATANNA--DO SOMETHING!
SUCH AS WHAT?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? BE CREATIVE!
LANRETE SRETAW GNIKRAP OT EFIL--THGIF BTSIM FO MOOD HTIW SREWOP EFIR!
THAT'S NOT EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND


WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A BIZARRE REPLAY OF THE WIZARD OF OZ?
COME ON, JEFF. ONCE THE MIST DISSOLVES WE MUST LEAVE...BEFORE IT CAN RETURN IN GREATER STRENGTH!
ZEE, JUST ONE SMALL POINT...
WHAT IF THE OLD GUY WAS LYING?
RUN, ZATANNA, BUT YOU'LL NOT SO EASILY ESCAPE ME...
NO ARGUMENTS FROM ME, KID. BUT WHERE DO WE GO?
WHERE KOHL SAID. THROUGH THE ETERNAL WATERS TO ANOTHER MYSTIC PLANE.
WHAT IF THERE ARE OTHER DANGERS ON THIS NEXT PLANE?
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO OVERCOME THEM. THERE'S NOTHING LEFT FOR ME HERE.
KOHL WAS RIGHT...I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO FOLLOW MY FATE, WHEREVER IT LEADS.


I, ALLURA, SHALL FOLLOW YOU TO EVERY MYSTIC PLANE!
AND IN THE END-- YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE MY VENGEANCE!
EVEN AS I SNATCH YOU FROM THE WATER, SO SHALL I SHALL ZATARA'S DAUGHTER ...AND IN THE DOING, MAKE YOUR DESTINY MY OWN!
HAHAHAHA


SOMETHING'S WRONG. I SHOULDN'T FEEL MENACED BY THE MORTAL.
ZEE! DO SOMETHING! THIS STUFF IS DRAGGING ME AWAY!
JEFF! I'VE GOT TO GET HIM OUT OF HERE!
GRETAW ONILRIW, RE'EN TA TSER ONES EFEL EMOH OT YSERCWODAH!
SOMETHING IS AFFECTING MY MAGIC--IT'S SO HARD TO THINK SO HARD TO STAY...
...AWAKE.


SHADOWCREST. I'M HOME.


WELCOME HOME, ZATANNA.
FATHER...?
YOUR MISSION TO THE SECRET CITY WAS A SUCCESS. THE SPELL YOU CAST THERE TO REVIVE YOUR MOTHER'S PEOPLE REVIVED ME, AS WELL, FREEING ME FROM DEATH.
HOW, OR WHY, I DON'T UNDERSTAND.. BUT I'M ALIVE...
...AND WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT, MY DARLING, WE'RE TOGETHER AGAIN.
FATHER--OH, THANK GOD!
LET'S GO DOWN TO THE HOUSE...TO SHADOWCREST. KASIM IS PREPARING DINNER... ONE OF HIS MOROCCAN FEASTS, JUST LIKE OLD TIMES.
EVERYTHING IS JUST AS IT WAS. YOU'RE HOME.
G-115


BUT...
I'M HOME. FATHER'S WELL-- WHY CAN'T I RELAX?
HAVE YOU TROUBLE SLEEPING, MISTRESS? MAY I BRING YOU A BROTH TO MAKE REST COME MORE EASILY?
KASIM...
HOTATH'S RINGS, YOU STARTLED ME.
I BEG FORGIVENESS. PLEASE, STEP INSIDE. THE NIGHT AIR IS CHILL, AND WE HAVE HAD SICKNESS ENOUGH IN THIS HOUSE.
JUST A MOMENT, KASIM... THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO ASK.
THAT TREE ON THE HILLSIDE...
46


...I DON'T REMEMBER EVER SEEING IT AT SHADOWCREST BEFORE. I FEEL AS IF I MUST BE LOSING MY MIND.
BUT THE TREE HAS BEEN THERE ALWAYS, MISTRESS.
PERHAPS THE EFFORT OF YOUR JOURNEY HAS STRAINED YOUR MEMORY. PLEASE... LET ME PREPARE A BROTH FOR YOUR REST.
YES... A BROTH. I MUST BE MORE EXHAUSTED THAN I THOUGHT. THANK YOU, KASIM. I NEED SLEEP...
...SO TIRED...
...NO. I'M NOT LOSING MY MIND...
...THERE WAS NO TREE AT SHADOWCREST!
AND THAT MEANS...


THIS IS NOT MY HOME!
PITY YOU'RE MORE PERCEPTIVE THAN I EXPECTED

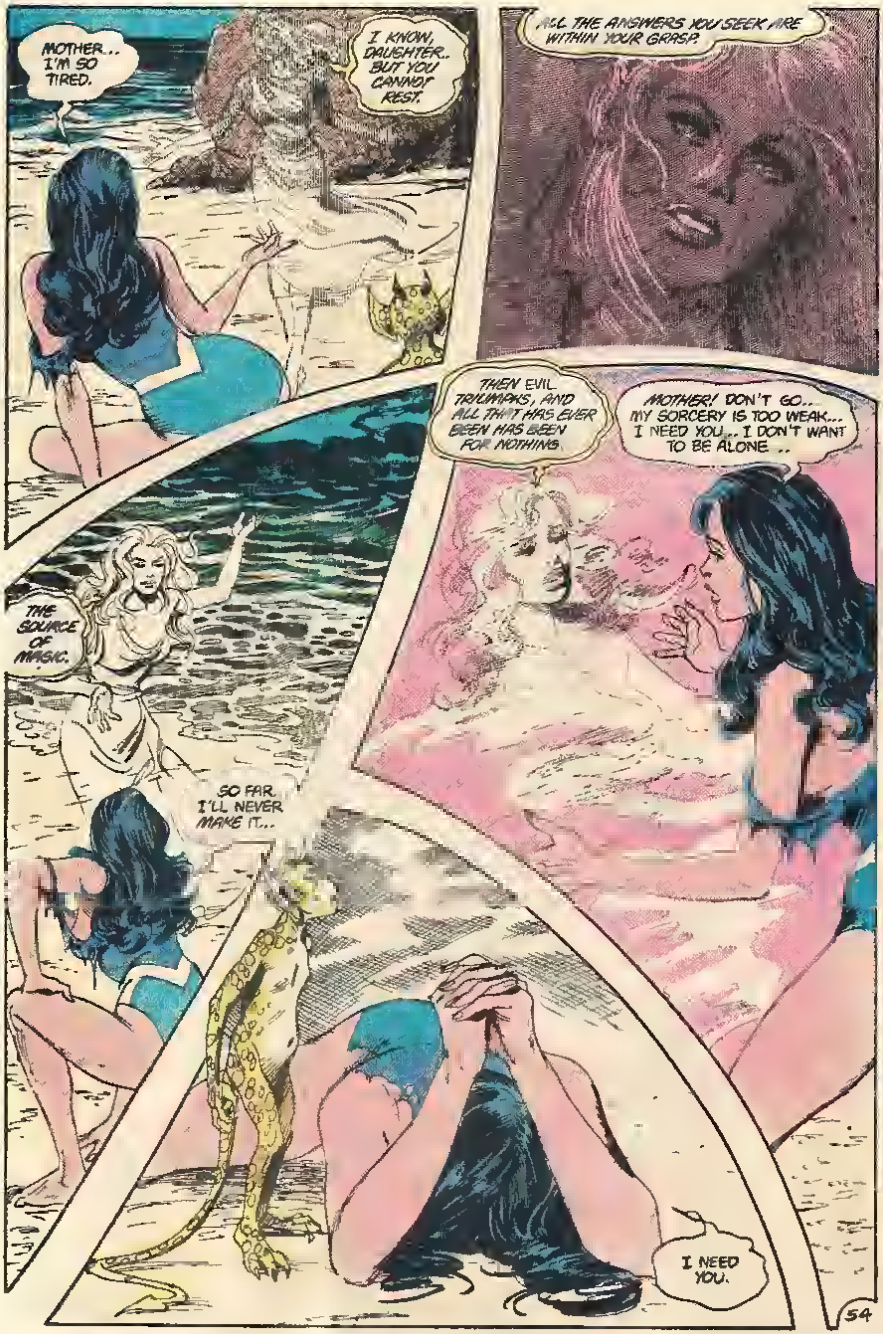

...ODDLY ENOUGH, YOU KNOW, I DON'T FEEL DISAPPOINTED. PART OF ME WOULD RATHER DISPOSE OF YOU IN A MORE... PERSONAL MANNER.
ALLURA! MY FATHER'S MORTAL ENEMY, MISTRESS OF THE DARK ELEMENTALS!
ALL OF THIS... MY FATHER'S GHOST, THE SPELL THAT ALMOST DESTROYED MY MOTHER'S CITY... IT'S ALL BEEN YOUR DOING!
HARDLY... THOUGH I MUST SAY, YOUR SUSPICIONS FLATTER ME.
THE TRUTH, DEAR CHILD, IS OTHERWISE. I PLAY NO PART IN ZATARA'S ILLNESS... NOR DO I KNOW WHETHER HIS DYING IS CONNECTED TO OVER WASTING SICKNESS THAT AFFLICTED THE HOMO MAGI.
BUT I'D BE LESS THAN CANDID IF I DIDN'T ADMIT THAT THE PROSPECT OF YOUR FATHER'S DEATH NT POSITIVELY DELIGHTS ME. I HAD NO IDEA.
OH YES, I BORE A GRUDGE AGAINST YOU TWO. HAVE YOU ANY IDEA HOW LONG IT TOOK ME TO BREAK THE SEAL ON THAT BOTTLE YOU LEFT ME IN?
WITCH! THIS TIME I'LL MAKE SURE THE SEAL IS PERMANENT!
GNINTHGIL EMOC OT YM DNAMMOC--!
YEARS, MY DEAR. SIMPLY YEARS.
NO, DEAR. I DON'T THINK SO.
KKZZAAAK
19


YOUR BACKWARDS-SPOKEN SPELLS DON'T WORK HERE, ZATANNA. THIS IS MY DOMAIN, AND IN MY HOME I SET THE RULES.
I'VE WATCHED YOU, UNSEEN, FOR WEEKS. IT WAS I WHO TRIED TO KEEP YOU FROM YOUR FATHER'S SIDE ... AND I WHO BLOCKED YOUR PATH TO YOUR MOTHER'S PEOPLE.
AND WHEN YOU AND YOUR HUMAN FRIEND, JEFFREY SLOAN, LEFT THE SECRET CITY TO JOURNEY TO ANOTHER MYSTIC PLANE--
--IT WAS I WHO SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVENGE MYSELF UPON YOU
YES, I WAS PARTICULARLY PROUD OF THAT PART OF THE ILLUSION I CAST... MAKING YOU FORGET YOUR FRIEND AND WOULD-BE LOVER.
JEFFREY
DON'T WORRY, DEAR... HE'S QUITE SAFE YOU SEE.
I INTERCEPTED YOU BOTH... YOU FREED YOUR COMPANION, BUT I TRAPPED YOU IN A DREAM. SOMEHOW THE ILLUSION I CAST WAS IMPERFECT, AND YOU SAW THROUGH THE DREAM TO THE REALITY BEYOND.
NOW YOU MUST CONFRONT THAT REALITY, AND REALITY HERE, IN MY DOMAIN, OF COURSE... IS DEATH.


TENDRILS OF NOTHINGNESS, ROUGH EXTRUSIONS--RISE!
INDIFFERENT TO PLEAS OR STRUGGLES--SEIZE!--ENSNARE MY PRIZE!
AAUUUU
IF ONLY YOUR MYSTIC POWERS WERE AT THEIR FULL STRENGTH, YOU MIGHT BREAK THESE TENDRILS...
...BUT THIS JOURNEY HAS WEAKENED YOU, ZATANNA... DEPLETING YOUR RESOURCES, AND LOWERING YOUR RESISTANCE
I'M ALMOST EMBARRASSED BY THE EASE WITH WHICH I'VE DEFEATED YOU.
ALMOST.
SNAP!
AS FOR YOUR QUEST TO FIND THE SOURCE OF MAGIC--
NEVER FEAR, IT SHALL BE COMPLETED

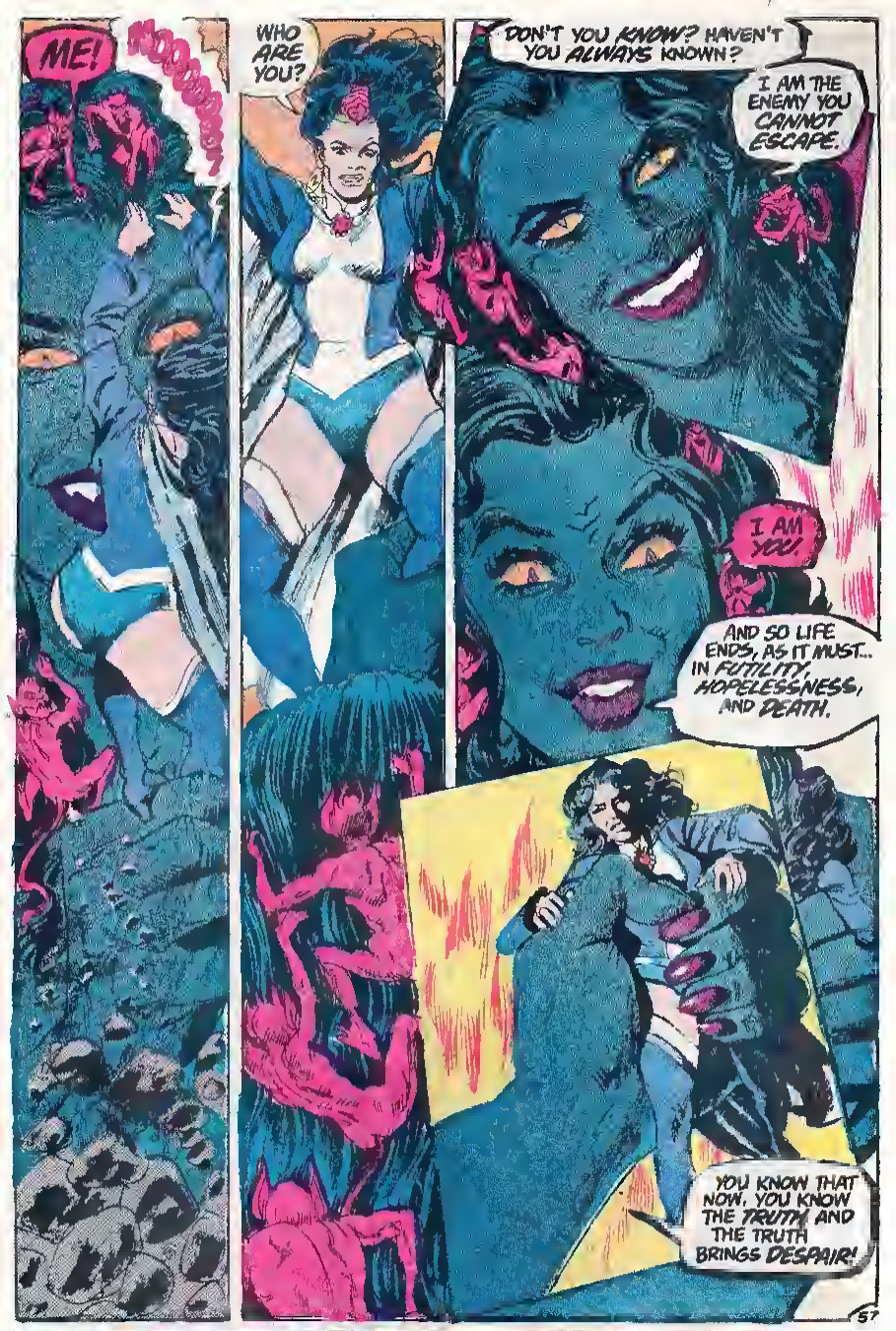

WITH THIS GEM TO LIGHT MY PATH, I'LL FIND THE SOURCE OF MAGIC... AND MAKE IT MY OWN. JUST THINK...
...I NEVER COULD HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!
FAREWELL, FOREVER ZATANNA!
I FEEL... SO COLD. NOTHINGNESS... DRAWS HEAT FROM MY SKIN. DRAWS LIFE FROM MY HEART!
MOTHER! I'VE FAILED FATHER!... I'VE FAILED YOU!
AND POOR JEFFREY... I HOPE YOU MADE IT HOME SAFELY, MY FRIEND.
FORGIVE ME... ALL OF YOU...
...FORGIVE...
...?


MOTHER? THE TREE?
MOTHER... SINDELLA... YOU COME TO ME FROM BEYOND DEATH...
...TELL ME WHAT TO DO!
TELL ME!


MOTHER... I'M SO TIRED.
I KNOW, DAUGHTER.. BUT YOU CANNOT REST.
ALL THE ANSWERS YOU SEEK ARE WITHIN YOUR GRASP.
THEN EVIL TRIUMPHS, AND ALL THAT HAS EVER BEEN HAS BEEN FOR NOTHING.
MOTHER! DON'T GO.. MY SORCERY IS TOO WEAK... I NEED YOU... I DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE ..
THE SOURCE OF MAGIC.
SO FAR. I'LL NEVER MAKE IT...
I NEED YOU.


LOOK AT ME MY DAUGHTER
HERE IS THE CYCLE OF ALL THINGS...BIRTH AND GROWTH, AN TURITY, REPRODUCTION, AGEDNESS AND DEATH...AND FROM DEATH--AGAIN, NEW LIFE.
I SENT YOU ON THIS QUEST TO FIND THE SOURCE OF MAGIC--AND YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED.
I'VE FOUND NOTHING!
YOU ARE WRONG.
DEATH IS THE ULTIMATE ENEMY!
LIFE IS THE SOURCE OF MAGIC, ZATANNA!
THE ENDLESS CYCLE... ALL THINGS INTERTWINED, LIVING AND DYING, EACH IN ITS TIME, EACH IN ITS SEASON.
THE LESSON IS THIS...THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR. THE KNOWLEDGE... THAT SECRET...IS THE ONLY MAGIC YOU NEED TO DEFEAT THE ULTIMATE ENEMY.
55


FROM THE DAY WE ARE BORN, WE CARRY THE ENEMY INSIDE US.
YOU MUST DESTROY THE ENEMY, DAUGHTER OF MY HEART...
WHAT ENEMY?
...OR IT WILL SURELY DESTROY YOU.
WHAT ENEMY, MOTHER?
WHAT ENEMY DO YOU THINK, LITTLE GIRL?


ME!
WHO ARE YOU?
DON'T YOU KNOW? HAVEN'T YOU ALWAYS KNOWN?
I AM THE ENEMY YOU CANNOT ESCAPE.
I AM YOU.
AND SO LIFE ENDS, AS IT MUST.. IN FUTILITY, HOPELESSNESS, AND DEATH.
YOU KNOW THAT NOW. YOU KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH BRINGS DESPAIR!


DESPAIR.
THAT'S WHAT MY MOTHER MEANT.
THE ENEMY WE CARRY WITHIN US OUR FEAR OF DEATH, OUR HOPELESSNESS
THE ENEMY IS DESPAIR!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I KNOW YOU NOW, OLD ENEMY. I SEE YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE.
YOU'VE BEEN WITHIN ME FOR YEAR-- MY WHOLE LIFE! YOU WEAKENED ME AS MY EVERY STEP BROUGHT ME NEARER TO FACING THE TRUTH!
YOU'LL NEVER BE FREE OF THIS FEAR! YOU ARE GOING TO DIE! AREN'T YOU... AFRAID?
NOT ANYMORE


SHE'S GONE. BUT EVEN WITHOUT WORDS, HER ANSWER IS CLEAR. MY QUEST DOES NOT END HERE. THERE IS A WAY FOR ME TO FREE MYSELF.. IF I CAN FIND IT.
AND I WILL FIND IT.
ALLURA TAUNTED ME... SAID MY BACKWARDS-SPOKEN SPELLS WOULD NOT WORK IN HER DOMAIN, THAT HERE SHE SET THE RULES.
HER DOMAIN, HER RULES, HER SPELL!
TENDRILS OF NOTHINGNESS, ROUGH EXTRUSIONS-- HEED!
RELEASE ME! SHRINK AND DISSIPATE! I MUST BE FREED!
TENDRILS...
RELEASE!


MOTHER WAS RIGHT.
LIFE IS THE SOURCE OF MAGIC.
I AM STRONG AGAIN!
BEGONE!


MR. SLOANE... YOU MUST EAT SOMETHING. THE MISTRESS WOULD NOT WISH YOU TO MAKE YOURSELF ILL..
SHE'S IN TROUBLE, KASIM, SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, IN SOME OTHER... SUPERNATURAL DIMENSION, SHE'S FACING THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF HER LIFE, SEARCHING FOR THE SOURCE OF MAGIC WHILE HER OWN POWERS ARE FADING AWAY...
...AND I CAN'T HELP HER. WORSE THAN THAT, I ALMOST GOT HER KILLED, WORRYING ABOUT ME WHEN SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN WORRYING ABOUT HERSELF.
THAT'S WHY SHE SPIRITED ME BACK HERE TO SHADOWCREST.
SHE SAID I SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON YOU, KASIM... BUT WE ALL KNOW THE REAL REASON SHE SENT ME HOME.
SHE CARES FOR YOU, MR. SLOANE.
YOUR TIME WILL COME, JEFFREY SLOANE.
YEAH. THAT'S THE KICKER. DAMN, I FEEL SO HELPLESS..


S-SINDELLA..?
MY DAUGHTER NEARS THE CLIMAX OF HER JOURNEY, JEFFREY SLOANE. WHAT SHE FINDS AT JOURNEY'S END WILL CHANGE HER.
HE MAY WILL BE EASED IF YOU ARE WAITING HERE FOR HER.
SHE WAS HERE... SHE TALKED TO ME!
KASIM! DID YOU SEE HER? ZATANNA'S MOTHER ?
I HEARD NOTHING, SAW NOTHING BUT I BELIEVE YOU, MR SLOANE FROM THE BEGINNING YOU HAVE BEEN A PART OF THIS.
MAY ALLAH GUIDE YOU ON YOUR PATH


ZATANNA...?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SAY SOMETHING.
HELLO, JEFF.
YOUR MOTHER SAID I HAD THE POWER TO HELP YOU—BUT I DIDN'T DO A THING.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO—YOU WERE HERE. YOU'RE PART OF MY LIFE. I HAD TO RETURN.
SHHHH—TAKE IT EASY. ZEE
I'VE FOUND THE SOURCE OF MAGIC, DEFEATED ALLURA—FOR NOW
AND EVEN IF IT MEANT LOSING MY FATHER AGAIN, IT BROUGHT REBIRTH TO HOMO MAGI
I CAN REST NOW
YOU WERE MY LINK WITH REALITY, JEFF.


...THE CYCLE OF LIFE IS COMPLETE.
The End

Comics Buyer's Guide
Fan Awards for 1986

1. Favorite Editor .....

2. Favorite Writer .....

3. Favorite Penciller .....

4. Favorite Inker .....

5. Favorite Colorist .....

6. Favorite Letterer .....

7. Favorite Cover Artist .....

8. Favorite Comic-Book Story .....

9. Favorite Comic Book .....

10. Favorite Limited Comic-Book Series .....

11. Favorite Graphic Novel .....

12. Favorite Character .....

13. Favorite Puhlication about Comics .....

Phil Seuling Award for Favorite Direct-Sale-Only Title .....

Only material cover-dated 1986 is eligible for consideration. Votes for ineligible material will not be counted. Anyone may copy and circulate this ballot, and any fan may vote only once and vote for no more than one nominee in each category. Ballot-box stuffing will result in the destruction of all ballots involved. You need not vote in all categories. *Comics Buyer's Guide* is not eligible for Category 13.

A free copy of *Comics Buyer's Guide* #700, dated April 17, 1987 (which will carry the results of voting), will be sent to any U.S. voter who does not already have a current or expired subscription to *CBG*. Votes from other countries will be counted, but we regret that a sample copy cannot be sent unless the vote is accompanied by $1.50 in U.S. funds to cover costs of handling and shipping to another country.

Mail your ballot individually in a single envelope by February 28, 1987, to:

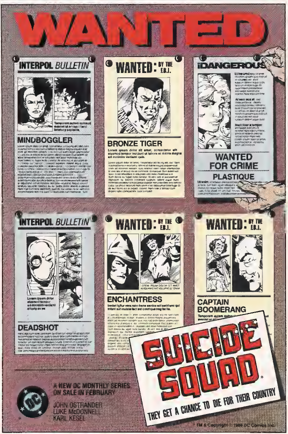
***Comics Buyer's Guide** Fan Awards*
700 East State Street
Iola, Wisconsin 54990

Name ..... **Age** ..... **Male Female** (circle one)

Street or Box .....

City, State, and ZIP .....

Please type or print your votes and information clearly.



WANTED
INTERPOL BULLETIN
MINDBOGGLER
WANTED: BY THE F.B.I.
BRONZE TIGER
DANGEROUS
WANTED FOR CRIME
PLASTIQUE
INTERPOL BULLETIN
DEADSHOT
WANTED: BY THE F.B.I.
ENCHANTRESS
WANTED: BY THE F.B.I.
CAPTAIN BOOMERANG
SUICIDE SQUAD
THEY GET A CHANCE TO DIE FOR THEIR COUNTRY
A NEW DC MONTHLY SERIES ON SALE IN FEBRUARY
JOHN OSTRANDER
LUKE McDONNELL
KARL KESEL
TM & Copyright © 1986 DC Comics Inc.